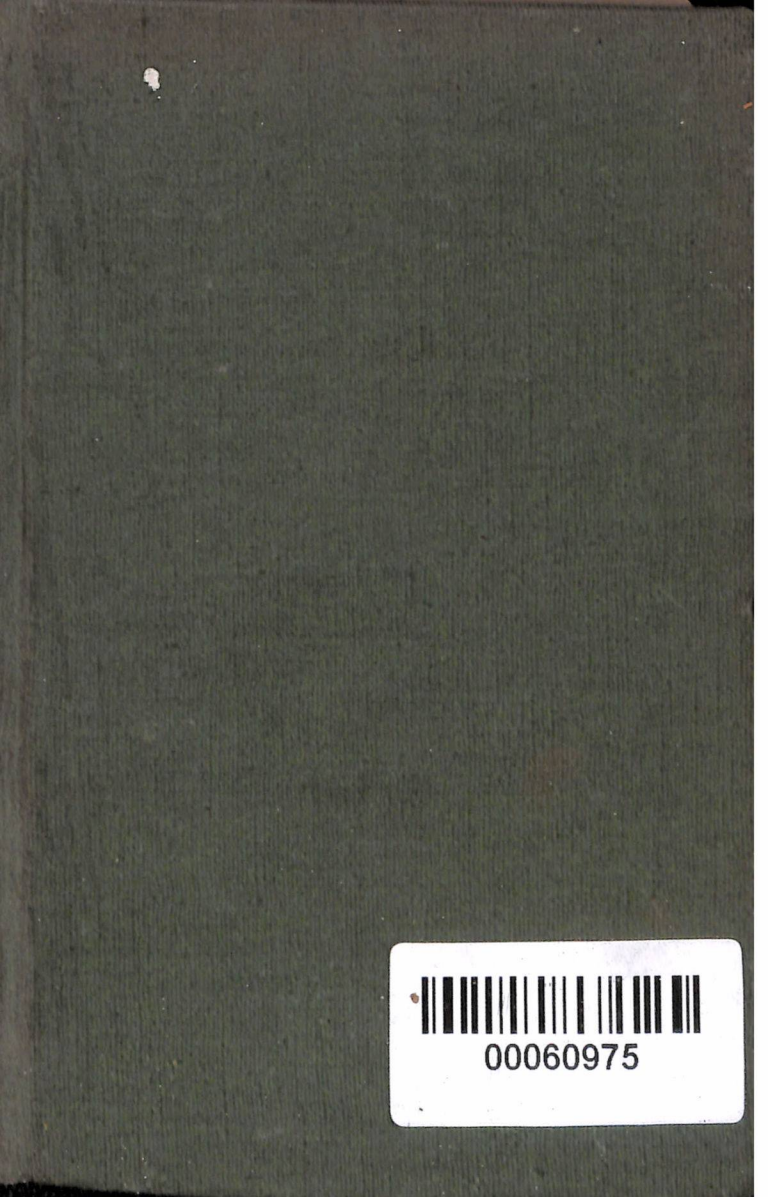

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Household Book of English Poetry

A HOUSEHOLD BOOK

OF

ENGLISH POETRY

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

With Notes

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a.c.

BY

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, D.D.

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PREFACE.

THE first question which I asked myself, when I resumed a purpose long ago entertained, and then for a long while laid aside, of publishing such a selection of English Poetry as the present, was this, namely, whether Mr. Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* had not so occupied the ground that there was no room for one who should come after. The selection is one made with so exact an acquaintance with the sources from which his *Treasury* was to be replenished, with so fine a taste in regard of what was worthy to be admitted there, that this was the conclusion to which at the first I was disposed to arrive. Presently, however, I saw reason to change my mind. The volume which I meditated was on so different a scheme and plan from his, that, while no doubt I should sometimes go over ground which he had gone over before, it was evident that for the most part our paths would be different, and my choice not identical with his. This to so great an extent has proved the case, that of more than three hundred pieces which compose this volume, less than seventy have appeared in his. And it is easy to perceive how this should be. His

is a *Treasury of the best songs and lyrical poems in the English Language*, and of these exclusively; but within this circle he proposes to include *all* which is of first-rate excellence in our language by authors not living. My scheme is at once broader and narrower; broader, in that I limit myself to no one particular class of poetry, and embrace the living and the dead alike; narrower, in that I make no attempt to be exhaustive, or to give more than a very few samples even of the best and greatest of our poets.

But if Mr. Palgrave had not forestalled me, I certainly did not feel that any other had so done. Most of the collections which have fallen under my eye have failed to give me the impression of being the result of direct and immediate investigation on the part of the collector into the treasures of our English Poetry. There is so much there which invites citation, and which has never been cited yet in any of our popular anthologies, that it is difficult to think that any one who had himself wandered in this garden of riches would not have carried off some flowers and fruits of his own gathering; instead of offering to us again, as most do, though it may be in somewhat different combinations, what already has been offered by others. When I see, for example, 'Queen and huntress chaste and fair,' doubtless a very graceful lyric, with one or two other familiar poems, doing duty in one collection after another as the specimens of Ben Jonson's verse, it is hard to suppose that his rich and pleasant *Underwoods* has been wandered through; since in that case something which others have not brought already would surely have

been brought away from thence; while the specimens from other poets provoke a similar misgiving. Whatever merit or demerit this may imply, the volume here presented lays claim to a certain originality—or, if that word cannot in this matter be allowed,—to a certain independence of judgment. There has not, indeed, been any attempt, as certainly there has been no desire, to reverse the general judgment and decision about the great poems of the language. He who should offer to do this would merely betray his own presumption, and his unfitness for even so humble a task as that here attempted. But in poems of a very high merit, which yet do not attain to the highest rank of all, there is ample space for the play of such an independent judgment, and I have not hesitated to exercise this. Many, which almost all collections have hitherto contained, will be looked for in vain in this; not a few which, so far as I know, none have included, have found room in it. It is not always that I have considered what I bring forward *better* than what to make place for it I set aside; but where I have only considered it as good, it has seemed a real gain to put new treasures within the reach of those who are little able, or, if able, are little likely, to go and discover such for themselves. But in very many instances I feel sure that what I have made room for is not merely as good, but better than that which to make room for it I have dismissed; nor has it been a little pleasure to draw from obscure retreats, or from retreats only familiar to those who have made English poetry more or less of a special

study, and acquainted themselves with its bye ways no less than its high ways, poems which little merit the oblivion into which they had fallen.

I have called this volume a *Household Book of English Poetry*, by this name implying that it is a book for all, that there is nothing in it to prevent it from being confidently placed in the hands of every member of the household. I wish I could have kept it within a moderate size by no more than the excluding from it everything of inferior value; but it will be evident to all who are at all acquainted with the inexhaustible opulence of English Poetry that I could only do this by continual acts of self-denial, having, at every step of my progress, to set my seal to the truth of that Eastern proverb which says, 'You may bring a nosegay to the city, but you cannot bring the garden.' This is indeed all which in this anthology I have attempted. To have allowed it to grow to a larger bulk would have defeated my hopes that it might be a volume which the emigrant, finding room for little not absolutely necessary, might yet find room for it in his trunk, and the traveller in his knapsack; and that on some narrow shelves where there are few books this might be one. But indeed the actual amount which such a volume contains, whether it be much or little, will be of less consequence in our eyes, when once we have apprehended that Horace was only under the mark when he affirmed of good poetry that ten times repeated it will please. It would be truer to say of a poem which in motive, in form, in diction, in melody, in unity of plan,

satisfies all conditions, that it is 'a joy for ever.' It is impossible so to draw out the sweetness of it that it shall not still have as much to yield us, or it may be more than it had at the beginning. How many another book, once read, can yield no more pleasure or profit to us—but poems of the highest order are in their very essence sources of a delight which is inexhaustible. However much of this has been drawn from them, as much or more remains behind.

There is another reflection which may console us in leaving so much untouched, namely, that almost every considerable poet has written something, in which all that he has of highest and most characteristic has come to a head. Thus I remember that Wordsworth used to speak of Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark* as the expression of the highest to which his genius had attained. Wordsworth's own *Lines on revisiting the banks of the Wye*, or, higher perhaps even than these, his *Lines suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a Storm*, I should regard as fulfilling for him the same conditions; and what is true of these two, is no less true of other poets out of number.

I have nowhere given extracts from larger poems, but only poems which may be regarded as complete in themselves. It is true that I have sometimes made room for such as, through their length, or through some other cause, must otherwise have been shut out, by omissions; but only where I believed these omissions to be real gains; and I do not think I have anywhere done this without giving warning to the reader. There are, no doubt,

certain inconveniences which attend a resolution only to give entire poems and not extracts; and this the chief one—that the space allotted to different poets cannot in all or nearly all instances represent or correspond to their several importance. Some poets have thrown all or well nigh all their poetic faculty into the composition of one or two great poems; and have very seldom indeed allowed themselves in briefer excursions into the land of song. Others on the contrary, of not higher, or it may be not nearly so high, a gift, have put a large part of their strength into these occasional poems, and will therefore yield for a volume like the present infinitely more than their more illustrious compeers. Under the action of this rule, and dramatic poetry being of necessity excluded, there is nothing of Shakespeare's to choose from but his Sonnets and his Songs—these certainly being in themselves much, but still little when compared with what is passed by. Again, one who does not believe in *Alexander's Feast*, and still less in the *Ode on the Death of Mrs. Killigrew*, finds it hard, indeed impossible, to deal anything approaching to justice to Dryden, or by specimens which are at his command to afford any true representation of the range of his powers or the eminence of his place in English literature. It is the same and nearly to the same extent with Pope; while others, like Gray and Campbell, get justice and more than justice; though, yielding what they do, one does not grudge this to them in the least. The inconvenience would certainly be a grave one, if the volume presented itself as primarily a Manual of English Poetry;

or an assistance to the study of the history of this; but having quite another as its primary object, it is one which may very well be borne, while the advantages of such a rule of selection are undoubted.

I have attached a few notes to this volume. I had intended to add many more, but under the pressure of events which now claim, and for a long time to come are likely to claim, nearly all one's thoughts and leisure, have been obliged to renounce the carrying of this intention out, and only to print those which were ready. If in them there is little or nothing with which professed students of English literature are not already familiar, I can only urge that this volume was not designed, and still less were the notes designed, for such; but for readers who, capable of an intelligent interest in the subject, have yet had neither time nor opportunity for special studies of their own in it, and who must therefore rely more or less on the hand-leading of others; nor I trust shall I be found fault with that I have sometimes taken upon me in these notes to indicate what seemed worthy of special admiration; or sought in other ways to plant the reader at that point of view from which the merits of some poem might be most deeply felt and best understood. If I am, I must plead in excuse that for myself in other regions of art, as in music or painting, where I have comparatively little or no confidence in my own judgment, I have been and often am most thankful to those, being persons whom I could trust, who have told me what to admire, and given me the reasons for

so doing. If we set aside a few intuitive geniuses, it is only thus that any of us can ever hope to be educated into independence of judgment; and I am sure that some, acknowledging this, will be grateful for notes of admiration, by which I have sometimes called their attention to that which otherwise might not obtain it, or might not obtain it to the full of its deserts.

LONDON: *May 8th*, 1868.

A

HOUSEHOLD BOOK

OF

ENGLISH POETRY.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

A MEDITATION UPON THE FRAILTY OF THIS LIFE.

O trifling toys that toss the brains,
  While loathsome life doth last;
O wishèd wealth, O sugared joys,
  O life when death is past;
Who loaths exchange of loss with gain?
  Yet loath we death as hell.
What woeful wight would wish his woe?
  Yet wish we here to dwell.
O Fancy frail, that feeds on earth,
  And stays on slippery joys;
O noble mind, O happy man,
  That can contemn such toys!

Such toys as neither perfect are,
  And cannot long endure;
Our greatest skill, our sweetest joy,
  Uncertain and unsure.

For life is short, and learning long,
All pleasure mixt with woe;
Sickness and sleep steal time unseen,
And joys do come and go.
Thus learning is but learned by halves,
And joy enjoyed no while;
That serves to show thee what thou want'st,
This helps thee to beguile.

But after death is perfect skill,
And joy without decay;
When sin is gone, that blinds our eyes,
And steals our joys away;
No crowing cock shall raise us up,
To spend the day in vain;
No weary labour shall us drive
To go to bed again.
But for we feel not what we want,
Nor know not what we have;
We love to keep the body's life,
We loath the soul to save.

Anon.

II

LOVE THE ONLY PRICE OF LOVE.

The fairest pearls that northern seas do breed,
For precious stones from eastern coasts are sold;
Nought yields the earth that from exchange is freed;
Gold values all, and all things value gold.
Where goodness wants an equal change to make,
There greatness serves, or number place doth take.

No mortal thing can bear so high a price,
But that with mortal thing it may be bought;

The corn of Sicil buys the western spice;
French wine of us, of them our cloth is sought.
No pearls, no gold, no stones, no corn, no spice,
No cloth, no wine, of Love can pay the price.

What thing is Love, which nought can countervail?
Nought save itself, ev'n such a thing is Love.
All worldly wealth in worth as far doth fail,
As lowest earth doth yield to heaven above.
Divine is Love, and scorneth worldly pelf,
And can be bought with nothing but with self.

Anon.

III

A POESY TO PROVE AFFECTION IS NOT LOVE.

Conceit, begotten by the eyes,
Is quickly born, and quickly dies;
For while it seeks our hearts to have,
Meanwhile there reason makes his grave:
For many things the eyes approve,
Which yet the heart doth seldom love.

For as the seeds, in springtime sown,
Die in the ground ere they be grown;
Such is conceit, whose rooting fails,
As child that in the cradle quails;
Or else within the mother's womb
Hath his beginning, and his tomb.

Affection follows Fortune's wheels,
And soon is shaken from her heels;
For following beauty or estate,
Her liking still is turned to hate;
For all affections have their change,
And Fancy only loves to range.

Desire himself runs out of breath,
And, getting, doth but gain his death;
Desire nor reason hath, nor rest,
And, blind, doth seldom choose the best:
Desire attained is not desire,
But as the cinders of the fire.

As ships in ports desired are drowned;
As fruit, once ripe, then falls to ground;
As flies, that seek for flames, are brought
To cinders by the flames they sought:
So fond Desire, when it attains,
The life expires, the woe remains.

And yet some poets fain would prove
Affection to be perfect love;
And that Desire is of that kind,
No less a passion of the mind,
As if wild beasts and men did seek
To like, to love, to choose alike.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

IV

LIFE.

The World's a bubble, and the Life of Man
Less than a span;
In his conception wretched; from the womb
So to the tomb;
Curst from his cradle, and brought up to years
With cares and fears.
Who then to frail mortality shall trust,
But limns on water, or but writes in dust.

Yet whilst with sorrow here we live oppress,
What life is best?

Courts are but only superficial schools
To dandle fools:
The rural parts are turned into a den
Of savage men:
And where's a city from foul vice so free,
But may be termed the worst of all the three?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,
Or pains his head:
Those that live single, take it for a curse,
Or do things worse:
Some would have children; those that have them, moan,
Or wish them gone:
What is it, then, to have, or have no wife,
But single thraldom, or a double strife?

Our own affections still at home to please
Is a disease:
To cross the seas to any foreign soil,
Peril and toil:
Wars with their noise affright us; when they cease,
We' are worse in peace:—
What then remains, but that we still should cry
For being born, or, being born, to die?

Lord Bacon.

V

NATURAL COMPARISONS WITH PERFECT LOVE.

The lowest trees have tops; the ant her gall;
The fly her spleen; the little sparks their heat:
The slender hairs cast shadows, though but small;
And bees have stings, although they be not great.
Seas have their surges, so have shallow springs;
And love is love, in beggars as in kings.

Where rivers smoothest run, deep are the fords;
  The dial stirs, yet none perceives it move;
The firmest faith is in the fewest words;
  The turtles cannot sing, and yet they love.
True hearts have eyes, and ears, no tongues to speak;
They hear, and see, and sigh; and then they break.

Anon.

VI

THE SOUL'S ERRAND.

Go, Soul, the body's guest,
  Upon a thankless errand;
Fear not to touch the best;
  The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the Court it glows
  And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the Church it shows
  What's good, and doth no good.
If Church and Court reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell Potentates they live
  Acting by others' action;
Not loved unless they give,
  Not strong but by affection.
If Potentates reply,
Give Potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
  That manage the Estate,
Their purpose is ambition,
  Their practice only hate.
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
They beg for more by spending,
Who in their greatest cost
Like nothing but commending:
And if they make reply,
Then tell them all they lie.

Tell Zeal it wants devotion;
Tell Love it is but lust;
Tell Time it is but motion;
Tell Flesh it is but dust.
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell Age it daily wasteth;
Tell Honour how it alters;
Tell Beauty how she blasteth;
Tell Favour how it falters.
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell Wit how much it wrangles
In tickle points of niceness;
Tell Wisdom she entangles
Herself in over-wiseness.
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell Physic of her boldness;
Tell Skill it is pretension;
Tell Charity of coldness;
Tell Law it is contention.
And as they do reply,
So give them all the lie.

Tell Fortune of her blindness;
Tell Nature of decay;
Tell Friendship of unkindness;
Tell Justice of delay.

And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell Arts they have no soundness,
  But vary by esteeming;
Tell Schools they want profoundness,
  And stand so much on seeming.
If Arts and Schools reply,
Give Arts and Schools the lie.

Tell Faith it's fled the city;
  Tell how the country erreth;
Tell Manhood shakes off pity;
  Tell Virtue least preferreth.
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
  Commanded thee, done blabbing,
Because to give the lie
  Deserves no less than stabbing,
Stab at thee who that will,
No stab the soul can kill.

Anon.

VII

I

MUNDUS QUALIS.

What is the world? tell, worldling, if thou know it.
If it be good, why do all ills o'erflow it?
  If it be bad, why dost thou like it so?
If it be sweet, how comes it bitter then?
If it be bitter, what bewitcheth men?
  If it be friend, why kills it, as a foe,
Vain-minded men that over-love and lust it?
If it be foe, fondling, how dar'st thou trust it?

2

EMBLEMA.

Friend faber, cast me a round hollow ball,
Blown full of wind, for emblem of this All;
Adorn it fair, and flourish every part
With flowers and fruits, with brooks, beasts, fish, and fowl,
With rarest cunning of thy curious art:
And grave in gold, about my silver bowl,
Thus rolls the world, the idol of mankind,
Whose fruit is fiction; whose foundation wind.

3

FUIMUS FUMUS.

Where, where are now the great reports
Of those huge haughty earthborn giants?
Where are the lofty towers and forts
Of those proud kings bade Heaven defiance?
When these I to my mind revoke,
Methinks I see a mighty smoke
Thick mounting from quick-burning matter,
Which in an instant winds do scatter.

4

OMNIA SOMNIA.

Go, silly worm, drudge, trudge, and travel,
Despising pain, so thou may'st gain
Some honour or some golden gravel;
But death the while, to fill his number,
With sudden call takes thee from all,
To prove thy days but dream and slumber.

5

MORS MORTIS.

The World and Death one day them cross-disguisèd,
To cozen man, when sin had once beguiled him.
Both called him forth, and questioning advisèd
To say whose servant he would fairly yield him.
Man, weening then but to the World to' have given him,
By the false World became the slave of Death;
But from their fraud he did appeal by faith
To HIM whose death killed Death, and from the world has driven him.

Joshua Sylvester.

VIII

THE STORY OF A SUMMER DAY.

O perfect Light, which shaid away
The darkness from the light,
And set a ruler o'er the day,
Another o'er the night;

Thy glory, when the day forth flies,
More vively does appear,
Than at midday unto our eyes
The shining sun is clear.

The shadow of the earth anon
Removes and drawis by,
While in the east, when it is gone,
Appears a clearer sky.

Which soon perceive the little larks,
The lapwing and the snipe,
And tune their songs, like Nature's clerks,
O'er meadow, muir, and stripe.

Our hemisphere is polished clean,
And lightened more and more;
While everything is clearly seen,
Which seemèd dim before:

Except the glistering astres bright,
Which all the night were clear,
Offuskèd with a greater light
No longer do appear.

The golden globe incontinent
Sets up his shining head,
And o'er the earth and firmament
Displays his beams abread.

For joy the birds with boulden throats
Against his visage sheen
Take up their kindly music notes
In woods and gardens green.

The dew upon the tender crops,
Like pearles white and round,
Or like to melted silver drops,
Refreshes all the ground.

The misty reek, the clouds of rain
From tops of mountains skails,
Clear are the highest hills and plain,
The vapours take the vales.

The ample heaven, of fabric sure,
In cleanness does surpass
The crystal and the silver pure,
Or clearest polished glass.

The time so tranquil is and still,
That no where shall ye find,
Save on a high and barren hill,
The air of peeping wind.

All trees and simples, great and small,
That balmy leaf do bear,
Than they were painted on a wall,
No more they move or steir.

Calm is the deep and purple sèa,
Yea, smoother than the sand;
The waves, that weltering wont to be,
Are stable like the land.

So silent is the cessile air,
That every cry and call,
The hills and dales and forest fair
Again repeats them all.

The flourishes and fragrant flowers,
Through Phœbus' fostering heat,
Refreshed with dew and silver showers,
Cast up an odour sweet.

The clŏggèd busy humming bees,
That never think to drone,
On flowers and flourishes of trees,
Collect their liquor brown.

The sun, most like a speedy post,
With ardent course ascends;
The beauty of the heavenly host
Up to our zenith tends;

Not guided by a Phaëthon,
Not trainèd in a chair,
But by the high and holy One,
Who does all where empire.

The burning beams down from his face
So fervently can beat,
That man and beast now seek a place
To save them from the heat.

The herds beneath some leafy tree,
Amidst the flowers they lie ;
The stable ships upon the sea
Tend up their sails to dry.

With gilded eyes and open wings,
The cock his courage shows ;
With claps of joy his breast he dings,
And twenty times he crows.

The dove with whistling wings so blue,
The winds can fast collect,
Her purple pens turn many a hue
Against the sun direct.

Now noon is went ; gone is midday,
The heat does slake at last,
The sun descends down west away,
For three o'clock is past.

The rayons of the sun we see
Diminish in their strength,
The shade of every tower and tree
Extended is in length.

Great is the calm, for everywhere
The wind is setting down,
The reek throws right up in the air
From every tower and town.

The gloming comes, the day is spent;
The sun goes out of sight,
And painted is the occident
With purple sanguine bright.

The scarlet nor the golden thread,
Who would their beauty try,
Are nothing like the colour red
And beauty of the sky.

Our west horizon circular,
From time the sun be set,
Is all with rubies, as it were,
Or roses red o'erfret.

What pleasure were to walk and see,
Endlong a river clear,
The perfect form of every tree
Within the deep appear.

Oh then it were a seemly thing,
While all is still and calm,
The praise of God to play and sing
With cornet and with shalm!

All labourers draw home at even,
And can to other say,
Thanks to the gracious God of heaven,
Which sent this summer day.

Alexander Hume.

IX

A VOW TO LOVE FAITHFULLY, HOWSOEVER HE BE REWARDED.

Set me whereas the sun doth parch the green,
Or where his beams do not dissolve the ice;
In temperate heat where he is felt and seen;
In presence prest of people, mad or wise;
Set me in high, or yet in low degree;
In longest night, or in the shortest day;
In clearest sky, or where clouds thickest be;
In lusty youth, or when my hairs are gray:
Set me in heaven, in earth, or else in hell,
In hill or dale, or in the foaming flood;

Thrall, or at large, alive whereso I dwell,
Sick or in health, in evil fame or good,
Hers will I be; and only with this thought
Content myself, although my chance be nought.

Earl of Surrey.

X.

AN APPEAL.

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since whan
The suit, the service none tell can;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways;
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! oh! forget not this,
How long ago hath been, and is
The mind that never meant amiss—
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved—
Forget not this!

Sir Thomas Wyat.

XI

A RENUNCIATION.

If women could be fair, and yet not fond,
  Or that their love were firm, not fickle still,
I would not marvel that they make men bond
  By service long to purchase their good will;
But when I see how frail those creatures are,
I muse that men forget themselves so far.

To mark the choice they make, and how they change,
  How oft from Phœbus they do flee to Pan;
Unsettled still, like haggards wild they range,
  These gentle birds that fly from man to man;
Who would not scorn and shake them from the fist,
And let them fly, fair fools, which way they list?

Yet for disport we fawn and flatter both,
  To pass the time when nothing else can please,
And train them to our lure with subtle oath,
  Till, weary of their wiles, ourselves we ease;
And then we say when we their fancy try,
To play with fools, oh what a fool was I!

Earl of Oxford.

XII

THE EXCELLENCY OF HIS LOVE.

Give place, ye lovers, here before
  That spent your boasts and brags in vain:
My lady's beauty passeth more
  The best of yours, I dare well say'n,
Than doth the sun the candle light,
Or brightest day the darkest night.

And thereto hath a troth as just
As had Penelope the fair;
For what she saith, ye may it trust,
As it by writing sealèd were;
And virtues hath she many mo,
Than I with pen have skill to show.

I could rehearse, if that I would,
The whole effect of Nature's plaint,
When she had lost the perfect mould,
The like to whom she could not paint:
With wringing hands how she did cry,
And what she said, I know it, I.

I know she swore with raging mind,
Her kingdom only set apart,
There was no loss by law of kind
That could have gone so near her heart;
And this was chiefly all her pain:
'She could not make the like again.'

Sith Nature thus gave her the praise
To be the chiefest work she wrought;
In faith, methink! some better ways
On your behalf might well be sought,
Than to compare, as ye have done,
To match the candle with the sun.

Earl of Surrey.

XIII

When first mine eyes did view and mark
Thy beauty fair for to behold,
And when mine ears 'gan first to hark
The pleasant words that thou me told,
I would as then I had been free
From ears to hear, and eyes to see.

And when in mind I did consent
To follow thus my fancy's will,
And when my heart did first relent
To taste such bait, myself to spill,
I would my heart had been as thine,
Or else thy heart as soft as mine.

O flatterer false! thou traitor born,
What mischief more might thou devise
Than thy dear friend to have in scorn,
And him to wound in sundry wise;
Which still a friend pretends to be,
And art not so by proof I see?
Fie, fie upon such treachery!

William Hunnis.

XIV

TO HIS FORSAKEN MISTRESS.

I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
And I might have gone near to love thee,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, had power to move thee;
But I can let thee now alone,
As worthy to be loved by none.

I do confess thou'rt sweet, but find
Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
Thy favours are but like the wind,
That kisses everything it meets:
And since thou can with more than one,
Thou'rt worthy to be kissed by none.

The morning rose that untouched stands,
Armed with her briars, how sweetly smells
But, plucked and strained through ruder hands,
Her scent no longer with her dwells.

But scent and beauty both are gone,
And leaves fall from her, one by one.

Such fate ere long will thee betide,
When thou hast handled been a while;
Like sere flowers to be thrown aside;—
And I will sigh, while some will smile,
To see thy love for more than one
Hath brought thee to be loved by none.

Sir Robert Aytoun.

XV

THE SHEPHERD'S FAREWELL.

While that the sun with his beams hot
Scorchèd the fruits in vale and mountain,
Philon the shepherd, late forgot,
Sitting beside a crystal fountain,
In shadow of a green oak tree
Upon his pipe this song playèd he:
Adieu Love, adieu Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

So long as I was in your sight,
I was your heart, your soul, and treasure;
And evermore you sobbed and sighed,
Burning in flames beyond all measure:
Three days endured your love to me,
And it was lost in other three!
Adieu Love, adieu Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

Another shepherd you did see,
To whom your heart was soon enchainèd;
Full soon your love was leapt from me,
Full soon my place he had obtainèd.

Soon came a third, your love to win,
And we were out, and he was in.
Adieu Love, adieu Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

Sure you have made me passing glad
That you your mind so soon removèd,
Before that I the leisure had
To choose you for my best belovèd:
For all your love was past and done
Two days before it was begun:—
Adieu Love, adieu Love, untrue Love,
Untrue Love, untrue Love, adieu Love;
Your mind is light, soon lost for new love.

Anon.

XVI

SONNET.

Rudely thou wrongest my dear heart's desire,
In finding fault with her too portly pride:
The thing which I do most in her admire,
Is of the world unworthy most envíed;
For in those lofty looks is close implied
Scorn of base things and sdeign of foul dishonour,
Threatening rash eyes which gaze on her so wide,
That loosely they ne dare to look upon her.
Such pride is praise, such portliness is honour;
That boldness innocence bears in her eyes;
And her fair countenance, like a goodly banner,
Spreads in defiance of all enemies.
Was never in this world ought worthy tried,
Without some spark of such self-pleasing pride.

Edmund Spenser.

XVII

SONNET.

Like as a huntsman after weary chace,
Seeing the game from him escaped away,
Sits down to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds beguilèd of their prey;
So after long pursuit and vain assay,
When I all weary had the chace forsook,
The gentle deer returned the self-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brook;
There she beholding me with milder look,
Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide,
Till I in hand her yet half trembling took,
And with her own good-will her firmly tied;
Strange thing meseemed to see a beast so wild
So goodly won, with her own will beguiled.

Edmund Spenser.

XVIII

A VISION UPON THE FAIRY QUEEN.

Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay,
Within that temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn; and passing by that way
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair Love and fairer Virtue kept,
All suddenly I saw The Fairy Queen:
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept;
And from thenceforth those Graces were not seen,
For they this Queen attended; in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce,
Where Homer's spright did tremble all for grief,
And cursed the access of that celestial thief.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

XIX

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE.

Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That valleys, groves, [or] hills and fields,
Woods or steepy mountains yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall, on an ivory table, be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning.
If these delights thy mind may move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

Christopher Marlowe.

XX

THE ANSWER.

If all the world and Love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee, and be thy love,

Time drives the flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold;
Then Philomel becometh dumb,
The rest complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields;
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy bed of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten;
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move,
To come to thee, and be thy love.

What should we talk of dainties then,
Of better meat than's fit for men?
These are but vain: that's only good
Which God hath blessed and sent for food.

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need;
Then those delights my mind might move,
To live with thee, and be thy love.

Anon.

XXI

SAMELA.

Like to Diana in her summer weed,
Girt with a crimson robe of brightest dye,
Goes fair Samela;
Whiter than be the flocks that straggling feed,
When washed by Arethusa faint they lie,
Is fair Samela;
As fair Aurora in her morning grey,
Decked with the ruddy glister of her love,
Is fair Samela;
Like lovely Thetis on a calmèd day,
Whenas her brightness Neptune's fancy move,
Shines fair Samela;
Her tresses gold, her eyes like glassy streams,
Her teeth are pearl, the breasts are ivory
Of fair Samela;
Her cheeks like rose and lily yield forth gleams,
Her brows' bright arches framed of ebony;
Thus fair Samela
Passeth fair Venus in her bravest hue,
And Juno in the show of majesty,
For she's Samela:
Pallas in wit, all three, if you will view,
For beauty, wit, and matchless dignity
Yield to Samela.

Robert Greene.

XXII

SILENT MUSIC.

Rose-cheeked Laura, come!
Sing thou smoothly with thy beauty's
Silent music, either other
Sweetly gracing.

Lovely forms do flow
From concent divinely framed,
Heaven is music, and thy beauty's
Birth is heavenly.

These dull notes we sing
Discords need for helps to grace them;
Only beauty purely loving
Knows no discord;

But still moves delight,
Like clear springs renewed by flowing,
Ever perfect, ever in themselves eternal.

Thomas Campion.

XXIII

TRIUMPH OF CHARIS.

See the chariot at hand here of Love,
Wherein my lady rideth!
Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
And well the car Love guideth.
As she goes, all hearts do duty
Unto her beauty,
And enamoured do wish, so they might
But enjoy such a sight,
That they still were to run by her side,
Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride.

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth!
Do but look on her hair, it is bright
As Love's star when it riseth!
Do but mark, her forehead's smoother
Than words that soothe her!

And from her arched brows, such a grace
Sheds itself through the face,
As alone there triumphs to the life
All the gain, all the good of the elements' strife.

Have you seen but a bright lily grow,
Before rude hands have touched it?
Have you marked but the fall o' the snow,
Before the soil hath smutched it?
Have you felt the wool of the beaver?
Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt o' the bud of the briar?
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag o' the bee?
O so white! O so soft! O so sweet is she!

Ben Jonson.

XXIV

A BRIDAL SONG.

Roses, their sharp spines being gone,
Not royal in their smells alone,
But in their hue;
Maiden-pinks, of odour faint;
Daisies smell-less, yet most quaint,
And sweet thyme true;

Primrose, first-born child of Ver,
Merry spring-time's harbinger,
With her bells dim;
Oxlips in their cradles growing,
Marigolds on death-beds blowing,
Lark-heels trim;

All, dear Nature's children sweet,
Lie 'fore bride and bridegroom's feet,
  Blessing their sense!
Not an angel of the air,
Bird melodious, or bird fair,
  Be absent hence!

The crow, the slanderous cuckoo, nor
The boding raven, nor chough hoar,
  Nor chattering pie,
May on our bride-house perch or sing,
Or with them any discord bring,
  But from it fly!

Beaumont and Fletcher.

XXV

SONNET.

You that do search for every purling spring,
Which from the ribs of old Parnassus flows,
And every flower, not sweet perhaps, which grows
Near thereabouts, into your posy wring;
You that do dictionaries' method bring
Into your rhymes, running in rattling rows;
You that poor Petrarch's long deceasèd woes
With new-born sighs and wit disguisèd sing;
You take wrong ways: those far-fetched helps be such
As do bewray a want of inward touch:
And sure at length stoln goods do come to light.
But if (both for your love and skill) your name
You seek to nurse at fullest breasts of fame,
Stella behold, and then begin to' endite.

Sir Philip Sidney.

XXVI

SONNET.

Come Sleep, O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent Judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw.
Oh! make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise, and blind of light,
A rosy garland, and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me
Livelier than elsewhere Stella's image see.

Sir Philip Sidney.

XXVII

SONNET.

To yield to those I cannot but disdain,
Whose face doth but entangle foolish hearts;
It is the beauty of the better parts,
With which I mind my fancies for to chain.
Those that have nought wherewith men's minds to gain,
But only curlèd locks and wanton looks,
Are but like fleeting baits that have no hooks,
Which may well take, but cannot well retain.
He that began to yield to the outward grace,
And then the treasures of the mind doth prove,
He who as 'twere was with the mask in love,
What doth he think whenas he sees the face?
No doubt being limed by the outward colours so,
That inward worth would never let him go.

Earl of Stirling.

XXVIII

SONNET.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste;
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since-cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before:—
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

William Shakespeare.

XXIX

SONNET.

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you—you pattern of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

William Shakespeare.

XXX

SONNET.

Oh how much more doth beauty beauteous seem,
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumèd tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their maskèd buds discloses;
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwooed, and unrespected fade;
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall vade, by verse distils your truth.

William Shakespeare.

XXXI

SONNET.

A good that never satisfies the mind,
A beauty fading like the April flowers,
A sweet with floods of gall that runs combined,
A pleasure passing ere in thought made ours,
A honour that more fickle is than wind,
A glory at opinion's frown that lowers,
A treasury which bankrupt time devours,
A knowledge than grave ignorance more blind,
A vain delight our equals to command,
A style of greatness, in effect a dream,
A swelling thought of holding sea and land,
A servile lot, decked with a pompous name;
Are the strange ends we toil for here below,
Till wisest death make us our errors know.

William Drummond.

XXXII

SONNET.

Look how the flower which lingeringly doth fade,
The morning's darling late, the summer's queen,
Spoiled of that juice which kept it fresh and green,
As high as it did raise, bows low the head:
Right so my life, contentments being dead,
Or in their contraries but only seen,
With swifter speed declines than erst it spread,
And, blasted, scarce now shows what it hath been.
As doth the pilgrim therefore, whom the night
Hastes darkly to imprison on his way,
Think on thy home, my soul, and think aright
Of what yet rests thee of life's wasting day;
Thy sun posts westward, passèd is thy morn,
And twice it is not given thee to be born.

William Drummond.

XXXIII

SONNET.

Alexis, here she stayed; among these pines,
Sweet hermitress, she did alone repair;
Here did she spread the treasure of her hair,
More rich than that brought from the Colchian mines.
She sat her by these muskèd eglantines,
The happy place the print seems yet to bear;
Her voice did sweeten here thy sugared lines,
To which winds, trees, beasts, birds did lend an ear.
Me here she first perceived, and here a morn
Of bright carnations did o'erspread her face:
Here did she sigh, here first my hopes were born,
Here first I got a pledge of promised grace:
But ah! what served it to be happy so?
Sith passèd pleasures double but new woe?

William Drummond.

XXXIV

SONNET.

Sweet spring, thou turn'st with all thy goodly train,
Thy head with flames, thy mantle bright with flowers;
The zephyrs curl the green locks of the plain,
The clouds for joy in pearls weep down their showers,
Thou turn'st, sweet youth; but ah! my pleasant hours
And happy days with thee come not again;
The sad memorials only of my pain
Do with thee come, which turn my sweets to sours.
Thou art the same which still thou wast before,
Delicious, lusty, amiable, fair;
But she, whose breath embalmed thy wholesome air,
Is gone; nor gold nor gems her can restore.
Neglected Virtue! seasons go and come,
When thine, forgot, lie closèd in a tomb.

William Drummond.

XXXV

SONNET.

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,—
Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

Michael Drayton.

XXXVI

A SAD SONG.

Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow calls no time that's gone:
Violets plucked, the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again;
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully;
Fate's hidden ends eyes cannot see:
Joys as wingèd dreams fly fast,
Why should sadness longer last?
Grief is but a wound to woe;
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no mo.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

XXXVII

INVOCATION TO SLEEP.

Come, Sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving
Lock me in delight awhile;
Let some pleasing dreams beguile
All my fancies; that from thence
I may feel an influence,
All my powers of care bereaving!

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy!
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought,
Through an idle fancy wrought:
Oh, let my joys have some abiding!

Beaumont and Fletcher.

XXXVIII

SONG.

Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear;
Say, I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

Beaumont and Fletcher.

XXXIX

THE SHEPHERD'S PRAISE OF HIS SACRED DIANA.

Praised be Diana's fair and harmless light,
Praised be the dews, wherewith she moists the ground:
Praised be her beams, the glory of the night,
Praised be her power, by which all powers abound.

Praised be her nymphs, with whom she decks the woods,
Praised be her knights, in whom true honour lives:
Praised be that force by which she moves the floods,
Let that Diana shine which all these gives.

In heaven Queen she is among the spheres,
She, mistress-like, makes all things to be pure;
Eternity in her oft change she bears,
She beauty is, by her the fair endure.

Time wears her not, she doth his chariot guide,
Mortality below her orb is placed;
By her the virtue of the stars down slide,
In her is Virtue's perfect image cast.
A knowledge pure it is her worth to know:
With Circe let them dwell that think not so.

Anon.

XL

TRUE GROWTH.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make men better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere.
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Ben Jonson.

XLI

THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.

Fair stood the wind for France
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Kaux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marched towards Agincourt
In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
With all his power.

Which in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide
To the King sending;
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet with an angry smile,
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
'Though they to one be ten,
Be not amazèd.
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
By fame been raisèd.

'And for myself,' quoth he,
'This my full rest shall be;
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me.
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me.

'Poictiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell:
No less our skill is,
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat
By many a warlike feat,
Lopped the French lilies.'

The Duke of York so dread,
The eager vaward led;

With the main Henry sped,
Amongst his henchmen.
Exeter had the rear,
A braver man not there,
O Lord! how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drum now to drum did groan,
To hear was wonder;
That with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which did the signal aim
To our hid forces;
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilbows drew,
And on the French they flew;
Not one was tardy;

Arms were from shoulders sent;
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went,
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble king,
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,
As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruisèd his helmet.

Gloucester, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother;
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry.

Oh, when shall Englishmen
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry!

Michael Drayton.

XLII

TO HIMSELF.

Where dost thou careless lie,
Buried in ease and sloth?
Knowledge, that sleeps, doth die;
And this security,
It is the common moth
That eats on wits and arts, and [so] destroys them both.

Are all the Aonian springs
Dried up? lies Thespia waste?
Doth Clarius' harp want strings,
That not a nymph now sings!
Or droop they as disgraced,
To see their seats and bowers by chattering pies defaced?

If hence thy silence be,
As 'tis too just a cause,
Let this thought quicken thee:
Minds that are great and free,
Should not on Fortune pause;
'Tis crown enough to Virtue still, her own applause.

What though the greedy fry
Be taken with false baits
Of worded balladry,
And think it poesy?
They die with their conceits,
And only piteous scorn upon their folly waits.

Then take in hand thy lyre,
  Strike in thy proper strain,
With Japhet's line, aspire
Sol's chariot for new fire,
  To give the world again :
Who aided him, will thee, the issue of Jove's brain.

And since our dainty age
  Cannot endure reproof,
Make not thyself a page
To that strumpet the stage,
  But sing high and aloof,
Safe from the wolf's black jaw, and the dull ass's hoof.

Ben Jonson.

XLIII

MELANCHOLY.

Hence, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
  Wherein you spend your folly !
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see't,
  But only melancholy,
  Oh, sweetest melancholy !
Welcome, folded arms, and fixèd eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chained up without a sound !
Fountain-heads, and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves !
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls !
  A midnight bell, a parting groan !
  These are the sounds we feed upon ;
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley ;
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.

Beaumont and Fletcher.

XLIV

LEWD LOVE IS LOSS.

Misdeeming eye! that stoopeth to the lure
  Of mortal worths, not worth so worthy love;
All beauty's base, all graces are impure,
  That do thy erring thoughts from God remove.
Sparks to the fire, the beams yield to the sun,
All grace to God, from whom all graces run.

If picture move, more should the pattern please;
  No shadow can with shadowed thing compare,
And fairest shapes, whereon our loves do seize,
  But silly signs of God's high beauty are.
Go, starving sense, feed thou on earthly mast;
True love, in heaven seek thou thy sweet repast.

Glean not in barren soil these offal ears,
  Sith reap thou may'st whole harvests of delight;
Base joys with griefs, bad hopes do end with fears,
  Lewd love with loss, evil peace with deadly fight:
God's love alone doth end with endless ease,
Whose joys in hope, whose hope concludes in peace.

Let not the luring train of fancies trap,
  Or gracious features, proofs of Nature's skill,
Lull Reason's force asleep in Error's lap,
  Or draw thy wit to bent of wanton will.
The fairest flowers have not the sweetest smell;
A seeming heaven proves oft a damning hell.

Self-pleasing souls, that play with beauty's bait,
  In shining shroud may swallow fatal hook;
Where eager sight on semblant fair doth wait,
  A lock it proves, that first was but a look:
The fish with ease into the net doth glide,
But to get out the way is not so wide.

So long the fly doth dally with the flame,
Until his singèd wings do force his fall;
So long the eye doth follow fancy's game,
Till love hath left the heart in heavy thrall.
Soon may the mind be cast in Cupid's jail,
But hard it is imprisoned thoughts to bail.

Oh! loathe that love whose final aim is lust,
Moth of the mind, eclipse of reason's light;
The grave of grace, the mole of Nature's rust,
The wrack of wit, the wrong of every right;
In sum, an ill whose harms no tongue can tell;
In which to live is death, to die is hell.

Robert Southwell.

XLV

TO THE WORLD. A FAREWELL FOR A GENTLEWOMAN, VIRTUOUS AND NOBLE.

False world, good night, since thou hast brought
That hour upon my morn of age,
Henceforth I quit thee from my thought,
My part is ended on thy stage.

Do not once hope, that thou canst tempt
A spirit so resolved to tread
Upon thy throat, and live exempt
From all the nets that thou canst spread.

I know thy forms are studied arts,
Thy subtil ways be narrow straits;
Thy courtesy but sudden starts,
And what thou call'st thy gifts, are baits.

I know too, though thou strut and paint,
Yet art thou both shrunk up and old;
That only fools make thee a saint,
And all thy good is to be sold.

I know thou whole art but a shop
Of toys and trifles, traps and snares,
To take the weak, or make them stop:
Yet art thou falser than thy wares.

And, knowing this, should I yet stay,
Like such as blow away their lives,
And never will redeem a day,
Enamoured of their golden gyves?

Or having 'scaped, shall I return,
And thrust my neck into the noose,
From whence so lately I did burn
With all my powers myself to loose?

What bird or beast is known so dull,
That fled his cage, or broke his chain,
And tasting air and freedom, wull
Render his head in there again?

If these who have but sense, can shun
The engines that have them annoyed;
Little for me had reason done,
If I could not thy gins avoid.

Yes, threaten, do. Alas, I fear
As little, as I hope from thee:
I know thou canst nor show, nor bear
More hatred than thou hast to me.

My tender, first, and simple years
Thou didst abuse, and then betray;
Since stirr'dst up jealousies and fears,
When all the causes were away.

Then in a soil hast planted me,
Where breathe the basest of thy fools;
Where envious arts professèd be,
And pride and ignorance the schools:

Where nothing is examined, weighed;
But as 'tis rumoured, so believed;
Where every freedom is betrayed,
And every goodness taxed or grieved.

But what we're born for, we must bear:
Our frail condition it is such,
That what to all may happen here,
If't chance to me, I must not grutch,

Else I my state should much mistake,
To harbour a divided thought
From all my kind: that for my sake
There should a miracle be wrought.

No! I do know that I was born
To age, misfortune, sickness, grief:
But I will bear these with that scorn,
As shall not need thy false relief.

Nor for my peace will I go far,
As wanderers do, that still do roam;
But make my strengths, such as they are,
Here in my bosom, and at home.

Ben Jonson.

XLVI

TO THE MEMORY OF BEN JONSON.

The Muses' fairest light in no dark time,
The wonder of a learnèd age; the line
Which none can pass; the most proportioned wit
To nature, the best judge of what was fit;
The deepest, plainest, highest, clearest pen;
The voice most echoed by consenting men;
The soul which answered best to all well said
By others, and which most requital made;

Tûned to the highest key of ancient Rome,
Returning all her music with his own;
In whom with nature study claimed a part,
And yet who to himself owed all his art:
Here lies Ben Jonson! every age will look
With sorrow here, with wonder on his book.

John Cleveland.

XLVII

A CONTENTED MIND.

I weigh not fortune's frown or smile;
I joy not much in earthly joys;
I seek not state, I seek not style;
I am not fond of fancy's toys;
I rest so pleased with what I have,
I wish no more, no more I crave.

I quake not at the thunder's crack;
I tremble not at noise of war;
I swound not at the news of wrack;
I shrink not at a blazing star;
I fear not loss, I hope not gain,
I envy none, I none disdain.

I see ambition never pleased;
I see some Tantals starved in store;
I see gold's dropsy seldom eased;
I see e'en Midas gape for more:
I neither want, nor yet abound—
Enough's a feast, content is crowned.

I feign not friendship, where I hate;
I fawn not on the great in show;
I prize, I praise a mean estate—
Neither too lofty nor too low:
This, this is all my choice, my cheer—
A mind content, a conscience clear.

Joshua Sylvester.

XLVIII

SONNET.

Poor Soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fooled by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within, and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess.
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then, Soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:—
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men;
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

William Shakespeare.

XLIX

SONNET.

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoyed no sooner than despisèd straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof—and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream:
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

William Shakespeare.

L

TIMES GO BY TURNS.

The loppèd tree in time may grow again;
Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
The sorriest wight may find release of pain,
The dries soil suck in some moistening shower;
Times go by turns, and chances change by course,
From foul to fair, from better hap to worse.

The sea of Fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favours to the lowest ebb;
Her tides have equal times to come and go;
Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web;
No joy so great but runneth to an end,
No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf, nor ever spring;
No endless night, yet not eternal day;
The saddest birds a season find to sing;
The roughest storm a calm may soon allay;
Thus with succeeding turns God tempereth all,
That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

A chance may win that by mischance was lost;
That net that holds no great, takes little fish;
In some things all, in all things none are crossed;
Few all they need, but none have all they wish;
Unmeddled joys here to no man befall,
Who least hath some, who most hath never all.

Robert Southwell.

LI

LIFE A BUBBLE.

This Life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air,
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere,

And strive who can most motion it bequeath;
And though it sometimes seem of its own might
Like to an eye of gold to be fixed there,
And firm to hover in that empty height,
That only is because it is so light.
But in that pomp it doth not long appear;
For when 'tis most admirèd, in a thought,
Because it erst was nought, it turns to nought.

William Drummond.

LII

MAN'S MORTALITY.

Like as the damask rose you see,
Or like the blossom on the tree,
Or like the dainty flower in May,
Or like the morning of the day,
Or like the sun, or like the shade,
Or like the gourd which Jonas had—
E'en such is man; whose thread is spun,
Drawn out, and cut, and so is done.
The rose withers; the blossom blasteth;
The flower fades; the morning hasteth;
The sun sets, the shadow flies;
The gourd consumes; and man he dies!

Like to the grass that's newly sprung,
Or like a tale that's new begun,
Or like the bird that's here to day,
Or like the pearlèd dew of May,
Or like an hour, or like a span,
Or like the singing of a swan—
E'en such is man; who lives by breath,
Is here, now there, in life, and death.
The grass withers, the tale is ended;
The bird is flown, the dew's ascended;
The hour is short, the span is long;
The swan's near death; man's life is done!

Simon Wastell.

LIII

OF MY DEAR SON GERVASE BEAUMONT.

Can I, who have for others oft compiled
The songs of death, forget my sweetest child,
Which, like the flower crusht, with a blast is dead,
And ere full time hangs down his smiling head,
Expecting with clear hope to live anew,
Among the angels fed with heavenly dew?
We have this sign of joy, that many days,
While on the earth his struggling spirit stays,
The name of Jesus in his mouth contains
His only food, his sleep, his ease from pains.
Oh! may that sound be rooted in my mind,
Of which in him such strong effect I find.
Dear Lord, receive my son, whose winning love
To me was like a friendship, far above
The course of nature, or his tender age;
Whose looks could all my bitter griefs assuage;
Let his pure soul, ordained seven years to be
In that frail body, which was part of me,
Remain my pledge in heaven, as sent to show,
How to this port at every step I go.

Sir John Beaumont.

LIV

DIRGE.

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renownèd be thy grave!

William Shakespeare.

LV

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones;
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach, 'In greatness is no trust.'
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royallest seed
That the earth did e'er suck in,
Since the first man died for sin:

Here the bones of birth have cried,
'Though gods they were, as men they died!'
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

Francis Beaumont.

LVI

DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST.

Victorious men of earth, no more
Proclaim how wide your empires are;
Though you bind-in every shore
And your triumphs reach as far
As night or day,
Yet you, proud monarchs, must obey,
And mingle with forgotten ashes, when
Death calls ye to the crowd of common men.

Devouring Famine, Plague, and War,
Each able to undo mankind,
Death's servile emissaries are;
Nor to these alone confined,
He hath at will
More quaint and subtle ways to kill;
A smile or kiss, as he will use the art,
Shall have the cunning skill to break a heart.

James Shirley.

LVII

THE SAME.

The glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings:

Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crookèd scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill:
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still:
Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds:
Your heads must come
To the cold tomb;
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in their dust.

James Shirley.

LVIII

LINES WRITTEN BY ONE IN THE TOWER, BEING YOUNG AND CONDEMNED TO DIE.

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares;
My feast of joy is but a dish of pain;
My crop of corn is but a field of tares;
And all my good is but vain hope of gain:
The day is [fled], and yet I saw no sun;
And now I live, and now my life is done!

The spring is past, and yet it hath not sprung;
The fruit is dead, and yet the leaves are green;

My youth is gone, and yet I am but young;
I saw the world, and yet I was not seen:
My thread is cut, and yet it is not spun;
And now I live, and now my life is done!

I sought my death, and found it in my womb;
I looked for life, and saw it was a shade;
I trod the earth, and knew it was my tomb;
And now I die, and now I am but made:
The glass is full, and now my glass is run;
And now I live, and now my life is done!

Chidiock Tychborn.

LIX

LINES WRITTEN THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS EXECUTION.

E'en such is time; which takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Which in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days:
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Sir Walter Raleigh.

LX

SONNET.

Most glorious Lord of life, that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
And, having harrowed hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win;
This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
And grant that we, for whom Thou diddest die,
Being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,

May live for ever in felicity:
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love Thee for the same again;
And for thy sake, that alllike dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain.
So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought;
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

Edmund Spenser.

LXI

THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end,
Thy joys when shall I see?

O happy harbour of the saints!
O sweet and pleasant soil!
In thee no sorrow may be found,
No grief, no care, no toil.

In thee no sickness may be seen,
Nor hurt, nor ache, nor sore;
There is no death, nor ugly dole,
But Life for evermore.

There lust and lucre cannot dwell,
There envy bears no sway;
There is no hunger, heat, nor cold,
But pleasure every way.

Thy walls are made of precious stones,
Thy bulwarks diamonds square;
Thy gates are of right orient pearl,
Exceeding rich and rare.

Thy turrets and thy pinnacles
With carbuncles do shine;
Thy very streets are paved with gold,
Surpassing clear and fine.

Thy houses are of ivory,
Thy windows crystal clear;
Thy tiles are made of beaten gold;—
O God, that I were there!

Ah, my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

Thy saints are crowned with glory great;
They see God face to face;
They triumph still, they still rejoice,
Most happy is their case.

We that are here in banishment
Continually do moan,
We sigh, and sob, we weep and wail,
Perpetually we groan.

Our sweet is mixed with bitter gall,
Our pleasure is but pain,
Our joys scarce last the looking on,
Our sorrows still remain.

But there they live in such delight,
Such pleasure and such play,
As that to them a thousand years
Doth seem as yesterday.

Thy gardens and thy gallant walks
Continually are green;
There grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen.

Quite through the streets, with silver sound,
The flood of Life doth flow;
Upon whose banks on every side
The wood of Life doth grow.

There trees for evermore bear fruit,
And evermore do spring;
There evermore the angels sit,
And evermore do sing.

Jerusalem, my happy home,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see!

Anon.

PART THE SECOND.

LXII

THE HAPPY LIFE.

How happy is he born and taught,
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death;
Not tied unto the world with care
Of public fame, or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Or vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good:

Who hath his life from rumours freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make accusers great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of his grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend;

--This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands;
And having nothing, yet hath all.

Sir Henry Wotton.

LXIII

WINIFREDA.

Away, let nought to love displeasing,
My Winifreda, move your care,
Let nought delay the heavenly blessing,
Nor squeamish pride nor gloomy fear.

What though no grants of royal donors
With pompous titles grace our blood?
We'll shine in more substantial honours,
And to be noble we'll be good.

Our name, while virtue thus we tender,
Will sweetly sound where'er 'tis spoke;
And all the great ones, they shall wonder
How they respect such little folk.

What though from fortune's lavish bounty
No mighty treasures we possess,
We'll find within our pittance plenty
And be content without excess.

Still shall each returning season
Sufficient for our wishes give;
For we will live a life of reason,
And that's the only life to live.

Through youth and age in love excelling,
We'll hand in hand together tread;
Sweet smiling peace shall crown our dwelling,
And babes, sweet smiling babes, our bed.

How should I love the pretty creatures,
While round my knees they fondly clung;
To see them look their mother's features,
To hear them lisp their mother's tongue.

And when with envy time transported,
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.

Anon.

LXIV

A LECTURE UPON THE SHADOW.

Stand still, and I will read to thee
A lecture, Love, in love's philosophy.
These three hours that we have spent
Walking here, two shadows went
Along with us, which we ourselves produced:
But, now the sun is just above our head,
We do those shadows tread,
And to brave clearness all things are reduced.
So whilst our infant loves did grow,
Disguises did and shadows flow
From us and from our cares; but now it is not so.

That love hath not attained the high'st degree,
Which is still diligent lest others see;
Except our loves at this noon stay,
We shall new shadows make the other way.
As the first were made to blind
Others, these which come behind
Will work upon ourselves, and blind our eyes,
If our loves faint, and westwardly decline,
To me thou falsely thine,
And I to thee mine actions shall disguise.
The morning shadows wear away,
But these grow longer all the day;
But, oh! love's day is short, if love decay.

Love is a growing or full constant light,
And his short minute, after noon, is night.

John Donne.

LXV

SONG.

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauties, orient deep,
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more, whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For, in pure love, heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more, whither doth haste
The nightingale, when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more, where those stars light,
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become, as in their sphere.

Ask me no more, if east or west,
The phœnix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

Thomas Carew.

LXVI

THE PRIMROSE.

Ask me why I send you here
This sweet Infanta of the year?
Ask me why I send to you
This primrose, thus bepearled with dew?
I will whisper to your ears,
The sweets of love are mixt with tears.

Ask me why this flower does show
So yellow-green, and sickly too?
Ask me why the stalk is weak,
And bending, yet it doth not break?
I will answer, these discover
What fainting hopes are in a lover.

Robert Herrick.

LXVII

TRUE LOVELINESS.

It is not beauty I demand,
A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,
Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair:

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
Your lips that seem on roses fed,
Your breasts, where Cupid tumbling lies,
Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed:—

A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks,
Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
A breath that softer music speaks
Than summer winds a-wooing flowers,

These are but gauds: nay, what are lips?
Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
Whose brink when your adventurer slips,
Full oft he perisheth on them.

And what are cheeks, but ensigns oft
That wave hot youth to fields of blood?
Did Helen's breast, though ne'er so soft,
Do Greece or Ilium any good?

Eyes can with baleful ardour burn;
Poison can breathe, that erst perfumed;
There's many a white hand holds an urn
With lovers' hearts to dust consumed.

For crystal brows there's nought within,
They are but empty cells for pride;
He who the Siren's hair would win
Is mostly strangled in the tide.

Give me, instead of beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind,
Which with temptation I would trust,
Yet never linked with error find,—

One in whose gentle bosom I
Could pour my secret heart of woes,
Like the care-burthened honey-fly
That hides his murmurs in the rose,—

My earthly comforter! whose love
So indefeasible might be
That, when my spirit wonned above,
Hers could not stay, for sympathy.

Anon.

LXVIII

THE ROSE'S MESSAGE.

Go, lovely Rose!
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That had'st thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share,
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!
Edmund Waller.

LXIX

THE ROSE'S PRIDE.

Thou blushing rose, within whose virgin leaves
The wanton wind to sport himself presumes,
Whilst from their rifled wardrobe he receives
For his wings purple, for his breath perfumes!

Blown in the morning, thou shalt fade ere noon;
What boots a life which in such haste forsakes thee?
Thou' art wondrous frolic, being to die so soon,
And passing proud a little colour makes thee.
Sir Richard Fanshawe.

LXX

TO CASTARA. THE REWARD OF INNOCENT LOVE.

We saw and wooed each other's eyes,
My soul contracted then with thine,
And both burnt in one sacrifice,
By which our marriage grew divine.

Let wilder youth, whose soul is sense,
Profane the temple of delight,
And purchase endless penitence
With the stol'n pleasure of one night.

Time's ever ours, while we despise
The sensual idol of our clay,
For though the suns do set and rise,
We joy one everlasting day;

Whose light no jealous clouds obscure,
While each of us shine innocent;
The troubled stream is still impure;
With virtue flies away content.

And though opinions often err,
We'll court the modest smile of fame,
For sin's black danger circles her
Who hath infection in her name.

Thus when to one dark silent room
Death shall our loving coffins thrust,
Fame will build columns on our tomb,
And add a perfume to our dust.

William Habington.

LXXI

LOVE'S ANNIVERSARY.

TO THE SUN.

Thou art returned, great light, to that blest hour
In which I first by marriage, sacred power,
Joined with Castara hearts: and as the same
Thy lustre is, as then, so is our flame;
Which had increased, but that by love's decree
'Twas such at first, it ne'er could greater be.
But tell me, glorious lamp, in thy survey
Of things below thee, what did not decay
By age to weakness? I since that have seen
The rose bud forth and fade, the tree grow green
And wither, and the beauty of the field
With winter wrinkled. Even thyself dost yield
Something to time, and to thy grave fall nigher;
But virtuous love is one sweet endless fire.

William Habington.

LXXII

THE SURRENDER.

My once dear Love! hapless that I no more
Must call thee so—the rich affection's store
That fed our hopes, lies now exhaust and spent,
Like sums of treasure unto bankrupts lent.
We, that did nothing study but the way
To love each other, with which thoughts the day
Rose with delight to us, and with them set,
Must learn the hateful art, how to forget.
We, that did nothing wish that Heaven could give,
Beyond ourselves, nor did desire to live
Beyond that wish, all these now cancel must,
As if not writ in faith, but words and dust.
Yet witness those clear vows which lovers make,
Witness the chaste desires that never brake
Into unruly heats; witness that breast,
Which in thy bosom anchored his whole rest,
'Tis no default in us, I dare acquit
Thy maiden faith, thy purpose fair and white
As thy pure self. Cross planets did envy
Us to each other, and Heaven did untie
Faster than vows could bind. Oh that the stars,
When lovers meet, should stand opposed in wars!
Since then some higher destinies command,
Let us not strive, nor labour to withstand
What is past help. The longest date of grief
Can never yield a hope of our relief;
And though we waste ourselves in moist laments,
Tears may drown us, but not our discontents.
Fold back our arms; take home our fruitless loves,
That must new fortunes try, like turtle doves
Dislodged from their haunts. We must in tears
Unwind a love knit up in many years.

In this last kiss I here surrender thee
Back to thyself,—so thou again art free;
Thou in another, sad as that, resend
The truest heart that lover e'er did lend.
Now turn from each. So fare our severed hearts,
As the divorced soul from her body parts.

Henry King.

LXXIII

THE BRIDE'S TRAGEDY.

O waly, waly up the bank,
And waly, waly down the brae,
And waly, waly yon burn-side,
Where I and my Love wont to gae.
I leaned my back unto an aik,
I thought it was a trusty tree;
But first it bowed, and syne it brak',
Sae my true Love did lichtly me.

O waly, waly, but love be bonnie,
A little time while it is new,
But when 'tis auld, it waxeth cauld,
And fades away like morning dew.
Oh! wherefore should I busk my head,
Or wherefore should I kame my hair?
For my true Love has me forsook,
And says he'll never love me mair.

Now Arthur-Seat shall be my bed,
The sheets shall ne'er be prest by me,
Saint Anton's well shall be my drink,
Since my true Love's forsaken me.
Martinmas wind, when wilt thou blaw,
And shake the green leaves off the tree?
O gentle Death! when wilt thou come?
For of my life I am wearie.

'Tis not the frost that freezes fell,
  Nor blawing snaw's inclemency;
'Tis not sic cauld that makes me cry,
  But my Love's heart grown cauld to me.
When we came in by Glasgow town,
  We were a comely sight to see;
My Love was clad in the black velvet,
  And I mysel' in cramasie.

But had I wist, before I kissed,
  That love had been sae ill to win,
I'd locked my heart in a case of gowd,
  And pinned it with a siller pin.
And oh! if my young babe were born,
  And set upon the nurse's knee,
And I mysel' were dead and gane,
  With the green grass growing over me!

Anon.

LXXIV

BURD HELEN.

I wish I were where Helen lies;
Night and day on me she cries;
Oh that I were where Helen lies
  On fair Kirconnell lea!

Curst be the heart that thought the thought,
And curst the hand that fired the shot,
When in my arms burd Helen dropt,
  And died to succour me!

Oh think na but my heart was sair,
When my Love dropt down and spak nae mair!
I laid her down wi' meikle care
  On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side,
None but my foe to be my guide,
None but my foe to be my guide,
On fair Kirconnell lea;

I lighted down my sword to draw,
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
I hackèd him in pieces sma',
For her sake that died for me.

O Helen fair, beyond compare!
I'll make a garland of thy hair
Shall bind my heart for evermair
Until the day I die.

Oh that I were where Helen lies!
Night and day on me she cries;
Out of my bed she bids me rise,
Says, 'Haste and come to me!'

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste!
If I were with thee, I were blest,
Where thou lies low and takes thy rest
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,
A winding-sheet drawn ower my een,
And I in Helen's arms lying,
On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies:
Night and day on me she cries;
And I am weary of the skies,
Since my Love died for me.

Anon.

LXXV

LOVE'S ENTERPRISE.

Over the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves;
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest
Love will find out the way.

Where there is no place
For the glowworm to lie;
Where there is no space
For receipt of a fly;
Where the midge dares not venture,
Lest herself fast she lay;
If Love come, he will enter
And find out the way.

You may esteem him
A child for his might;
Or you may deem him
A coward from his flight;
But if she whom Love doth honour
Be concealed from the day,
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way.

Some think to lose him
By having him confined;
And some do suppose him,
Poor heart! to be blind;
But if ne'er so close you wall him,
Do the best that you may,
Blind Love, if so you call him,
Will find out his way.

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist;
Or you may inveigle
The phœnix of the east;
The lioness, you may move her
To give o'er her prey;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover:
He will find out the way.

If the earth should part him,
He would gallop it o'er;
If the seas should o'erthwart him,
He would swim to the shore.
Should his Love become a swallow,
Through the air to stray,
Love will lend wings to follow,
And will find out the way.

There is no striving
To cross his intent,
There is no contriving
His plots to prevent;
But if once the message greet him,
That his true-love doth stay,
If death should come and meet him,
Love will find out the way.

Anon.

LXXVI

THE TWA BROTHERS.

There were twa brothers at the scule,
And when they got awa'—
'Its will ye play at the stane-chucking,
Or will ye play at the ba',
Or will ye gae up to yon hill head,
And there we'll warsell a fa'.'

'I winna play at the stane-chucking,
Nor will I play at the ba',
But I'll gae up to yon bonnie green hill,
And there we'll warsel a fa'.'

They warsled up, they warsled down,
Till John fell to the ground;
A dirk fell out of Willie's pouch,
And gave him a deadly wound.

'Oh, Billie, lift me on your back,
Take me to yon well fair,
And wash the bluid frae aff my wound,
And it will bleed nae mair.'

He's lifted his brother upon his back,
Ta'en him to yon well fair;
He's washed the bluid frae aff his wound,
But ay it bled mair and mair.

'Tak ye aff my Holland sark,
And rive it gair by gair,
And stap it in my bluidy wound,
And syne 'twill bleed nae mair.'

He's taken aff his Holland sark,
And torn it gair by gair;
He's stappit it in his bluidy wound,
But ay it bled mair and mair.

'Tak now aff my green sleiding,
And row me saftly in;
And tak me up to yon kirk style,
Where the grass grows fair and green.'

He's taken aff the green sleiding,
And rowed him saftly in;
He's laid him down by yon kirk style,
Where the grass grows fair and green.

'What will ye say to your father dear
When ye gae hame at e'en?'
'I'll say ye're lying at yon kirk style,
Where the grass grows fair and green.

'O no, O no, my brother dear,
O you must not say so;
But say that I'm gane to a foreign land,
Where nae man does me know.

When he sat in his father's chair
He grew baith pale and wan.
'O what blude's that upon your brow?
O dear son, tell to me.'
'It is the blude o' my gude gray steed,
He wadna ride wi' me.'

'O thy steed's blude was ne'er sae red,
Nor e'er sae dear to me:
O what blude's this upon your cheek?
O dear son, tell to me.'
'It is the blude of my greyhound,
He wadna hunt for me.'

'O thy hound's blude was ne'er sae red,
Nor e'er sae dear to me:
O what blude's this upon your hand?
O dear son, tell to me.'
'It is the blude of my gay gosshawk,
He wadna flee for me.'

'O thy hawk's blude was ne'er sae red,
Nor e'er sae dear to me:
O what blude's this upon your dirk?
Dear Willie, tell to me.'
'It is the blude of my ae brother,
O dule and wae is me!'

'O what will ye say to your father,
Dear Willie, tell to me?'
'I'll saddle my steed, and awa' I'll ride
To dwell in some far countrie.'

'O when will ye come hame again,
Dear Willie, tell to me?'
'When the sun and mune dance on yon green,
And that will never be.'

She turned hersel' right round about,
And her heart burst into three:
'My ae best son is deid and gane,
And my tother ane I'll ne'er see.'

Anon.

LXXVII

THE TWA SISTERS.

There were twa sisters lived in a bouir;
Binnorie, O Binnorie;
The youngest o' them, oh, she was a flouir
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

There came a squire frae the west;
He lo'ed them baith, but the youngest best;

He gied the eldest a gay gowd ring;
But he lo'ed the youngest abune a' thing.

He courted the eldest wi' broach and knife;
But he lo'ed the youngest as his life.

The eldest she was vexèd sair,
And sore envied her sister fair.

And it fell once upon a day,
The eldest to the youngest did say:

'Oh, sister, come to the sea-strand,
And see our father's ships come to land.

She's ta'en her by the milk-white hand,
And led her down to the sea-strand.

The youngest sat upon a stane;
The eldest came and pushed her in.

'Oh, sister, sister, lend me your hand,
And you shall be heir of half my land.'

'Oh, sister, I'll not reach my hand,
And I'll be heir of all your land.

'Shame fa' the hand that I should take!
It twinned me and my world's maik.'

'Oh, sister, reach me but your glove,
And you shall be sweet William's love.'

'Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove,
And sweet William shall better be my love.

'Your cherry cheeks and yellow hair
Had gar'd me gang maiden evermair.'

First she sank, and syne she swam,
Until she cam to Tweed mill-dam.

The miller's dauchter was baking breid,
And gaed for water as she had need.

'Oh, father, father, in our mill-dam
There's either a mermaid or a milk-white swan.'

The miller quickly drew his dam;
And there he fand a drowned woman.

You couldna see her yellow hair,
For gowd and pearls that were sae rare

You couldna see her middle sma',
Her gowden girdle was sae braw.

You couldna see her lilie feet,
Her gowden fringes were sae deep.

You couldna see her fingers sma',
Wi' diamond rings they were covered a'.

'Sair will they be, whae'er they be,
The hearts that live to weep for thee!'

Then by there cam a harper fine,
That harpèd to the king at dine.

And, when he looked that lady on,
He sighed, and made a heavy moan.

He has ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair,
And wi' them strung his harp sae fair.

And he brought the harp to her father's hall,
And there the court was assembled all.

He laid his harp upon a stone,
And straight it began to play alone.

'O yonder sits my father, the king!
And yonder sits my mother, the queen!

'And yonder stands my brother Hugh,
And by him my William sweet and true!'

But the last tune that the harp played then,
Binnorie, O Binnorie,
Was, 'Woe to my sister, false Helen!'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

A non.

LXXVIII

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth;
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity' and ruth.
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the Bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hast gained thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

John Milton.

LXXIX

EYES AND TEARS.

How wisely Nature did decree,
With the same eyes to weep and see!
That, having viewed the object vain,
They might be ready to complain.
And, since the self-deluding sight
In a false angle takes each height,
These tears, which better measure all,
Like watery lines and plummets fall.
Two tears, which sorrow long did weigh
Within the scales of either eye,
And then paid out in equal poise,
Are the true price of all my joys.

What in the world most fair appears,
Yea, even laughter, turns to tears :
And all the jewels which we prize,
Melt in these pendants of the eyes.
I have through every garden been,
Amongst the red, the white, the green ;
And yet from all those flowers I saw,
No honey but these tears could draw.
So the all-seeing sun each day
Distils the world with chymic ray ;
But finds the essence only showers,
Which straight in pity back he pours.
Yet happy they whom grief doth bless,
That weep the more, and see the less;
And, to preserve their sight more true,
Bathe still their eyes in their own dew.
So Magdalen in tears more wise
Dissolved those captivating eyes,
Whose liquid chains could flowing meet,
To fetter her Redeemer's feet.
Nor full sails hasting laden home,
Nor the chaste lady's pregnant womb,
Nor Cynthia teeming shows so fair
As two eyes, swoln with weeping, are.
The sparkling glance that shoots desire,
Drenched in these waves, does lose its fire.
Yea, oft the Thunderer pity takes,
And here the hissing lightning slakes.
The incense was to Heaven dear,
Not as a perfume, but a tear ;
And stars show lovely in the night,
But as they seem the tears of light.
Ope then, mine eyes, your double sluice,
And practise so your noblest use ;
For others too can see, or sleep ;
But only human eyes can weep.

Now, like two clouds dissolving, drop,
And at each tear in distance stop:
Now, like two fountains, trickle down:
Now, like two floods o'er-run and drown:
Thus let your streams o'erflow your springs,
Till eyes and tears be the same things;
And each the other's difference bears;
These weeping eyes, those seeing tears.

Andrew Marvell.

LXXX

TO MY WORTHY FRIEND MASTER GEORGE SANDYS, ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS.

I press not to the choir, nor dare I greet
The holy place with my unhallowed feet;
My unwashed Muse pollutes not things divine,
Nor mingles her profaner notes with thine;
Here, humbly waiting at the porch, she stays,
And with glad ears sucks in thy sacred lays.
So, devout penitents of old were wont,
Some without door, and some beneath the font,
To stand and hear the Church's liturgies,
Yet not assist the solemn exercise:
Sufficeth her, that she a lay-place gain,
To trim thy vestments, or but bear thy train;
Though not in tune nor wing she reach thy lark,
Her lyric feet may dance before the ark.
Who knows, but that her wandering eyes that run,
Now hunting glowworms, may adore the sun:
A pure flame may, shot by Almighty power
Into her breast, the earthly flame devour:
My eyes in penitential dew may steep
That brine, which they for sensual love did weep.
So (though 'gainst nature's course) fire may be quenched
With fire, and water be with water drenched;

Perhaps my restless soul, tired with pursuit
Of mortal beauty, seeking without fruit
Contentment there, which hath not, when enjoyed,
Quenched all her thirst, nor satisfied, though cloyed,
Weary of her vain search below, above
In the first Fair may find the immortal Love.
Prompted by thy example, then no more
In moulds of clay will I my God adore;
But tear those idols from my heart, and write
What his blest Spirit, not fond love, shall indite;
Then I no more shall court the verdant bay,
But the dry leafless trunk on Golgotha;
And rather strive to gain from thence one thorn,
Than all the flourishing wreaths by laureats worn.

Thomas Carew.

LXXXI

THE FLOWER.

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
Are thy returns! e'en as the flowers in spring;
To which, besides their own demean,
The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.
Grief melts away,
Like snow in May,
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shrivelled heart
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone
Quite under ground; as flowers depart
To see their mother-root, when they have blown;
Where they together
All the hard weather,
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are thy wonders, Lord of power,
Killing and quickening, bringing down to hell

And up to heaven in an hour;
Making a chiming of a passing bell.
We say amiss,
This or that is:
Thy word is all, if we could spell.

Oh, that I once past changing were,
Fast in thy Paradise, where no flower can wither!
Many a spring I shoot up fair,
Offering at heaven, growing and groaning thither:
Nor doth my flower
Want a spring-shower,
My sins and I joining together.

But while I grow in a straight line,
Still upwards bent, as if heaven were mine own,
Thy anger comes, and I decline:
What frost to that? what pole is not the zone
Where all things burn,
When Thou dost turn,
And the least frown of thine is shown?

And now in age I bud again,
After so many deaths I live and write;
I once more smell the dew and rain,
And relish versing: O my only Light,
It cannot be
That I am he,
On whom thy tempests fell at night.

These are thy wonders, Lord of love,
To make us see we are but flowers that glide:
Which when we once can find and prove,
Thou hast a garden for us, where to bide.
Who would be more,
Swelling through store,
Forfeit their Paradise by their pride.

George Herbert.

LXXXII

GOD UNSEARCHABLE.

Weigh me the fire; or canst thou find
A way to measure out the wind;
Distinguish all those floods that are
Mixt in that watery theatre;
And taste thou them as saltless there
As in their channel first they were;
Tell me the people that do keep
Within the kingdoms of the deep;
Or fetch me back that cloud again,
Beshivered into seeds of rain;
Tell me the motes, dust, sands, and spears
Of corn when summer shakes his ears;
Show me that world of stars, and whence
They noiseless spill their influence:
This if thou canst, then show me Him
That rides the glorious Cherubim.

Robert Herrick.

LXXXIII

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbèd song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow;

And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly:
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportioned sin
Jarred against Nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood,
In first obedience and their state of good.
Oh may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial consort us unite,
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light!

John Milton.

LXXXIV

THE RAINBOW.

Still young and fine! but what is still in view
We slight as old and soiled, though fresh and new.
How bright wert thou, when Shem's admiring eye
Thy burnished, flaming arch did first descry!
When Terah, Nahor, Haran, Abram, Lot,
The youthful world's gray fathers, in one knot
Did with intentive looks watch every hour
For thy new light, and trembled at each shower!
When thou dost shine, darkness looks white and fair,
Forms turn to music, clouds to smiles and air:
Rain gently spends his honey-drops, and pours
Balm on the cleft earth, milk on grass and flowers.
Bright pledge of peace and sunshine! the sure tie
Of thy Lord's hand, the object of his eye!

When I behold thee, though my light be dim,
Distant and low, I can in thine see Him,
Who looks upon thee from his glorious throne,
And minds the covenant betwixt all and One.

Henry Vaughan.

LXXXV

L'ALLEGRO.

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathèd smiles,

Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering Morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,

And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,

With stories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinched, and pulled, she said;
And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubbar-fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp and feast and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,

Married to immortal verse;
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning;
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

John Milton.

LXXXVI

IL PENSEROSO.

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,

And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs', and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypres lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait;
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:

But first and chiefest with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along.
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon-yoke
Gently o'er the accustomed oak:
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chantress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
  Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar:
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,

Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those demons that are found,
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptered pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what, though rare, of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
  But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower!
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek!
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
  Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,

Not tricked and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in aery stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high-embowèd roof
With antique pillars massy-proof,

And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness through mine ear
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit, and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

John Milton.

LXXXVII

CONTENTATION.

DIRECTED TO MY DEAR FATHER, AND MOST WORTHY FRIEND, MR. ISAAC WALTON.

Heaven, what an age is this! what race
Of giants are sprung up, that dare
Thus fly in the Almighty's face,
And with his Providence make war!

I can go nowhere but I meet
With malcontents and mutineers,
As if in life was nothing sweet,
And we must blessings reap in tears.

O senseless man! that murmurs still
For happiness, and does not know,
Even though he might enjoy his will,
What he would have to make him so.

Is it true happiness to be
By undiscerning Fortune placed
In the most eminent degree,
Where few arrive, and none stand fast?

Titles and wealth are Fortune's toils,
Wherewith the vain themselves ensnare:
The great are proud of borrowed spoils,
The miser's plenty breeds his care.

The one supinely yawns at rest,
The other eternally doth toil;
Each of them equally a beast,
A pampered horse, or labouring moil:

The titulados oft disgraced
By public hate or private frown,
And he whose hand the creature raised,
Has yet a foot to kick him down.

The drudge who would all get, all save,
Like a brute beast both feeds and lies;
Prone to the earth, he digs his grave,
And in the very labour dies.

Excess of ill-got, ill-kept, pelf
Does only death and danger breed;
Whilst one rich worldling starves himself
With what would thousand others feed.

By which we see that wealth and power,
Although they make men rich and great,
The sweets of life do often sour,
And gull ambition with a cheat.

Nor is he happier than these,
Who in a moderate estate,
Where he might safely live at ease,
Has lusts that are immoderate.

For he, by those desires misled,
Quits his own vine's securing shade,
To' expose his naked, empty head
To all the storms man's peace invade.

Nor is he happy who is trim,
Tricked up in favours of the fair,
Mirrors, with every breath made dim,
Birds, caught in every wanton snare.

Woman, man's greatest woe or bliss,
Does ofter far, than serve, enslave,
And with the magic of a kiss
Destroys whom she was made to save.

Oh! fruitful grief, the world's disease!
And vainer man, to make it so,
Who gives his miseries increase
By cultivating his own woe.

There are no ills but what we make
By giving shapes and names to things;
Which is the dangerous mistake
That causes all our sufferings.

We call that sickness, which is health;
That persecution, which is grace;
That poverty, which is true wealth;
And that dishonour, which is praise.

Alas! our time is here so short,
That in what state soe'er 'tis spent,
Of joy or woe, does not import,
Provided it be innocent.

But we may make it pleasant too,
If we will take our measures right,
And not what Heaven has done, undo
By an unruly appetite.

The world is full of beaten roads,
But yet so slippery withal,
That where one walks secure, 'tis odds
A hundred and a hundred fall.

Untrodden paths are then the best,
Where the frequented are unsure;
And he comes soonest to his rest,
Whose journey has been most secure.

It is content alone that makes
Our pilgrimage a pleasure here;
And who buys sorrow cheapest, takes
An ill commodity too dear.

Charles Cotton.

LXXXVIII

IN PRAISE OF HOPE.

Hope, of all ills that men endure
The only cheap and universal cure!
Thou captive's freedom, and thou sick man's health!
Thou loser's victory, and thou beggar's wealth!
Thou manna, which from heaven we eat,
To every taste a several meat!
Thou strong retreat, thou sure entailed estate,
Which nought has power to alienate!
Thou pleasant, honest flatterer, for none
Flatter unhappy men, but thou alone!

Hope, thou first-fruits of happiness!
Thou gentle dawning of a bright success!
Thou good preparative, without which our joy
Does work too strong, and whilst it cures, destroy;

Who out of fortune's reach dost stand,
And art a blessing still in hand!
Whilst thee, her earnest-money, we retain,
We certain are to gain,
Whether she her bargain break, or else fulfil;
Thou only good, not worse for ending ill!

Brother of Faith, 'twixt whom and thee
The joys of Heaven and earth divided be!
Though Faith be heir, and have the fixed estate,
Thy portion yet in moveables is great.
Happiness itself's all one
In thee, or in possession!
Only the future's thine, the present his!
Thine's the more hard and noble bliss;
Best apprehender of our joys, which hast
So long a reach, and yet canst hold so fast!

Hope, thou sad lover's only friend!
Thou way, that may'st dispute it with the end!
For love, I fear, 's a fruit that does delight
The taste itself less than the smell and sight.
Fruition more deceitful is
Than thou canst be, when thou dost miss;
Men leave thee by obtaining, and straight flee
Some other way again to thee:
And that's a pleasant country, without doubt,
To which all soon return that travel out.

Abraham Cowley.

LXXXIX

PROLOGUE.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. SPOKEN BY MR. HART, AT THE ACTING OF 'THE SILENT WOMAN.'

What Greece, when learning flourished, only knew,
Athenian judges, you this day renew.
Here too are annual rites to Pallas done,
And here poetic prizes lost or won.

Methinks I see you, crowned with olives, sit,
And strike a sacred horror from the pit.
A day of doom is this of your decree,
Where even the best are but by mercy free:
A day, which none but Jonson durst have wished to see,
Here they, who long have known the useful stage,
Come to be taught themselves to teach the age.
As your commissioners our poets go,
To cultivate the virtue which you sow;
In your Lycæum first themselves refined,
And delegated thence to human-kind.
But as ambassadors, when long from home,
For new instructions to their princes come,
So poets, who your precepts have forgot,
Return, and beg they may be better taught:
Follies and faults elsewhere by them are shown,
But by your manners they correct their own.
The illiterate writer, empiric-like, applies
To minds diseased, unsafe, chance remedies:
The learned in schools, where knowledge first began,
Studies with care the anatomy of man;
Sees virtue, vice, and passions, in their cause,
And fame from science, not from fortune, draws.
So poetry, which is in Oxford made
An art, in London only is a trade.
There haughty dunces, whose unlearnèd pen
Could ne'er spell grammar, would be reading men.
Such build their poems the Lucretian way;
So many huddled atoms make a play;
And if they hit in order by some chance,
They call that nature which is ignorance.
To such a fame let mere town-wits aspire,
And their gay nonsense their own cits admire.
Our poet, could he find forgiveness here,
Would wish it rather than a plaudit there.
He owns no crown from those Prætorian bands,
But knows that right is in the senate's hands,

Not impudent enough to hope your praise,
Low at the Muses' feet his wreath he lays,
And, where he took it up, resigns his bays.
Kings make their poets whom themselves think fit,
But 'tis your suffrage makes authentic wit.

John Dryden.

XC

PROLOGUE.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Though actors cannot much of learning boast,
Of all who want it, we admire it most:
We love the praises of a learnèd pit,
As we remotely are allied to wit.
We speak our poet's wit; and trade in ore,
Like those who touch upon the golden shore;
Betwixt our judges can distinction make,
Discern how much, and why, our poems take:
Mark if the fools, or men of sense, rejoice;
Whether the applause be only sound or voice.
When our fop-gallants, or our city-folly,
Clap over-loud, it makes us melancholy:
We doubt that scene which does their wonder raise,
And, for their ignorance, contemn their praise.
Judge then, if we who act, and they who write,
Should not be proud of giving you delight.
London likes grossly; but this nicer pit
Examines, fathoms all the depths of wit;
The ready finger lays on every blot;
Knows what should justly please, and what should not.
Nature herself lies open to your view;
You judge by her, what draught of her is true,
Where outlines false, and colours seem too faint,
Where bunglers daub, and where true poets paint.

But, by the sacred genius of this place,
By every Muse, by each domestic grace,
Be kind to wit, which but endeavours well,
And, where you judge, presumes not to excel.
Our poets hither for adoption come,
As nations sued to be made free of Rome:
Not in the suffragating tribes to stand,
But in your utmost, last, provincial band.
If his ambition may those hopes pursue,
Who with religion loves your arts and you,
Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
Than his own mother University.
Thebes did his green unknowing youth engage;
He chooses Athens in his riper age.

John Dryden.

XCI

DISTICHES.

River is time in water; as it came,
Still so it flows; yet never is the same.

I wake, and so new live; a night's protection
Is a new wonder, whiles a resurrection.

The sun's up; yet myself and God most bright
I can't see; I'm too dark, and He's too light.

Let devout prayér cast me to the ground,
So shall I yet to heaven be nearer found.

Clay, sand, and rock seem of a different birth;
So men; some stiff, some loose, some firm; all earth!

By red, green, blue, which sometimes paint the air,
Guilt, pardon, Heaven, the rainbow does declare.

The world's a prison; no man can get out;
Let the atheist storm then; Heaven is round about.

The rose is but the flower of a briar;
The good man has an Adam to his sire.

The dying mole, some say, opens his eyes;
The rich, till 'tis too late, will not be wise.

The sick hart eats a snake, and so grows well;
Repentance digests sin, and man 'scapes hell.

Flies, oft removed, return. Do they want fear,
Or shame, or memory? Flies are everywhere.

Pride cannot see itself by mid-day light;
The peacock's tail is farthest from his sight.

The swallow's a quick arrow, that may show
With what an instant swiftness life doth flow.

The nightingale's a quire, no single note;
O various power of God in one small throat!

The silkworm's its own wonder; without loom
It does provide itself a silken room.

The moon is the world's glass; in which 'twere strange
If we saw her's and saw not our own change.

Herodotus is history's fresh youth;
Thucydides is judgment, age, and truth.

In sadness, Machiavel, thou didst not well,
To help the world to run faster to hell.

The Italian's the world's gentleman, the Court
To which thrift, wit, lust, and revenge resort.

Bogs, purgatory, wolves, and ease, by fame
Are counted Ireland's earth, mistake, curse, shame.

The Indies, Philip, spread not like thy robe;
Art thou the new horizon to the globe?

Down, pickaxe; to the depths for gold let's go;
We'll undermine Peru. Is'nt heaven below?

Who gripes too much casts all upon the ground;
Too great a greatness greatness doth confound.

All things are wonder since the world began;
The world's a riddle, and the meaning's man.

Barten Holyday.

XCII

FAME UNMERITED.

There's none should places have in Fame's high court
But those that first do win Invention's fort;
Not messengers, that only make report.

To messengers rewards of thanks are due
For their great pains, telling their message true,
But not the honour to invention new.

Many there are that suits will make to wear
Of several patches, stoln both here and there,
That to the world they gallants may appear:

And the poor vulgar, who but little know,
And reverence all that makes a glistering show,
Examine not the same how they came to.

Then do they call their friends and all their kin;
They factions make the ignorant to win,
And with their help into Fame's court get in.

Duchess of Newcastle.

XCIII

ON THE DEATH OF PRINCE HENRY, SON OF JAMES THE FIRST.

Methought his royal person did foretell
A kingly stateliness, from all pride clear;
His look majestic seemèd to compel
All men to love him, rather than to fear.

60975

And yet though he were every good man's joy,
And the alonely comfort of his own,
His very name with terror did annoy
His foreign foes so far as he was known.
Hell drooped for fear; the Turkey moon looked pale;
Spain trembled; and the most tempestuous sea,
(Where Behemoth, the Babylonish whale,
Keeps all his bloody and imperious plea)
Was swoln with rage, for fear he'd stop the tide
Of her o'er-daring and insulting pride.

George Wither.

XCIV

ON HIS MISTRESS, THE QUEEN OF BOHEMIA.

You meaner beauties of the night,
Which poorly satisfy our eyes,
More by your number than your light,—
You common people of the skies,
What are you, when the Moon shall rise?

You violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known,
Like the proud virgins of the year,
As if the spring were all your own,—
What are you, when the Rose is blown?

You curious chanters of the wood,
That warble forth dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents,—what's your praise,
When Philomel her voice doth raise?

So when my Mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty of her mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
Tell me, if she were not designed
The eclipse and glory of her kind?

Sir Henry Wotton.

XCV

LORD STRAFFORD'S MEDITATIONS IN THE TOWER.

Go, empty joys,
With all your noise,
And leave me here alone,
In sweet sad silence to bemoan
The fickle worldly height,
Whose danger none can see aright,
Whilst your false splendours dim his sight.

Go, and ensnare
With your trim ware
Some other easy wight,
And cheat him with your flattering light;
Rain on his head a shower
Of honours, favour, wealth, and power;
Then snatch it from him in an hour.

Fill his big mind
With gallant wind
Of insolent applause;
Let him not fear all-curbing laws,
Nor king, nor people's frown;
But dream of something like a crown,
Then, climbing towards it, tumble down.

Let him appear
In his bright sphere
Like Cynthia in her pride,
With starlike troops on every side;
For number and clear light
Such as may soon o'erwhelm him quite,
And blend them both in one dead night.

Welcome, sad night,
Grief's sole delight,

Thy mourning best agrees
With honour's funeral obsequies!
In Thetis' lap he lies,
Mantled with soft securities,
Whose too much sunshine dims his eyes.

Was he too bold,
Who needs would hold
With curbing reins the Day,
And make Sol's fiery steeds obey?
Then, sure, as rash was I,
Who with ambitious wings did fly
In Charles's Wain too loftily.

I fall, I fall!
Whom shall I call?
Alas can he be heard,
Who now is neither loved nor feared?
You who have vowed the ground
To kiss, where my blest steps were found,
Come, catch me at my last rebound.

How each admires
Heaven's twinkling fires,
Whilst from their glorious seat
Their influence gives light and heat;
But oh! how few there are,
Though danger from the act be far,
Will run to catch a falling star.

Now 'tis too late
To imitate
Those lights whose pallidness
Argues no inward guiltiness;
Their course one way is bent;
Which is the cause there's no dissent
In Heaven's High Court of Parliament.

Anon.

XCVI

I'LL NEVER LOVE THEE MORE.

My dear and only Love, I pray
That little world of thee
Be governed by no other sway
But purest monarchy:
For if confusion have a part,
Which virtuous souls abhor,
And hold a Synod in thy heart,
I'll never love thee more.

As Alexander I will reign,
And I will reign alone;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
A rival on my throne.
He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all.

But I will reign and govern still,
And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will,
And all to stand in awe:
But 'gainst my batteries if I find
Thou storm, or vex me sore,
As if thou set me as a blind,
I'll never love thee more.

And in the empire of thy heart,
Where I should solely be,
If others do pretend a part,
Or dare to share with me:
Or committees if thou erect,
Or go on such a score,
I'll smiling mock at thy neglect,
And never love thee more.

But if no faithless action stain
  Thy love and constant word,
I'll make thee famous by my pen,
  And glorious by my sword.
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
  As ne'er was known before;
I'll deck and crown thy head with bays,
  And love thee more and more.

Marquis of Montrose.

XCVII

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON.

When Love with unconfinèd wings
  Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
  To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair,
  And fettered to her eye,
The birds, that wanton in the air,
  Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
  With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses crowned,
  Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
  When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes, that tipple in the deep,
  Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
  With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty
  And glories of my King;

When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

Richard Lovelace.

XCVIII.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING BEYOND THE SEAS.

If to be absent were to be
Away from thee;
Or that when I am gone
You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind, or swallowing wave.

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown, and greet as angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
Our after-fate,
And are alive i' the skies,
If thus our lips and eyes
Can speak like spirits unconfined
In Heaven, their earthy bodies left behind.

Richard Lovelace.

XCIX

A CAVALIER WAR-SONG.

A steed, a steed, of matchless speed,
A sword of metal keen;
All else to noble hearts is dross,
All else on earth is mean.
The neighing of the war-horse proud,
The rolling of the drum,
The clangour of the trumpet loud,
Be sounds from heaven that come.
And oh! the thundering press of knights,
Whenas their war-cries swell,
May toll from heaven an angel bright,
And rouse a fiend from hell.

Then mount, then mount, brave gallants all,
And don your helms amain;
Death's couriers, Fame and Honour, call
Us to the field again.
No shrewish tears shall fill our eye,
When the sword-hilt's in our hand;
Heart-whole we'll part, and no whit sigh
For the fairest in the land.
Let piping swain and craven wight
Thus weep and puling cry;
Our business is like men to fight,
And, like to heroes, die!

Anon.

C

THE SOLDIER GOING TO THE FIELD.

Preserve thy sighs, unthrifty girl,
To purify the air;
Thy tears to thread, instead of pearl,
On bracelets of thy hair.

The trumpet makes the echo hoarse,
And wakes the louder drum;
Expense of grief gains no remorse,
When sorrow should be dumb:

For I must go, where lazy peace
Will hide her drowsy head;
And, for the sport of kings, increase
The number of the dead.

But first I'll chide thy cruel theft;
Can I in war delight,
Who, being of my heart bereft,
Can have no heart to fight?

Thou know'st the sacred laws of old
Ordained a thief should pay,
To quit him of his theft, sevenfold
What he had stol'n away.

Thy payment shall but double be;
Oh then with speed resign
My own seducèd heart to me,
Accompanied with thine.

Sir William Davenant.

CI

LOYALTY CONFINED.

Beat on, proud billows; Boreas, blow;
Swell, curlèd waves, high as Jove's roof;
Your incivility doth show
That innocence is tempest-proof:
Though surly Nereus frown, my thoughts are calm;
Then strike, Affliction, for thy wounds are balm.

That which the world miscalls a jail,
A private closet is to me,

Whilst a good conscience is my bail,
And innocence my liberty:
Locks, bars, and solitude together met,
Make me no prisoner, but an anchoret.

I, whilst I wished to be retired,
Into this private room was turned;
As if their wisdom had conspired
The salamander should be burned;
Or like a sophy that would drown a fish,
I am constrained to suffer what I wish.

The cynic loves his poverty;
The pelican her wilderness;
And 'tis the Indian's pride to be
Naked on frozen Caucasus:
Contentment cannot smart; stoics we see
Make torments easy to their apathy.

These manacles upon my arm
I, as my mistress' favours, wear;
And for to keep my ancles warm,
I have some iron shackles there:
These walls are but my garrison; this cell,
Which men call jail, doth prove my citadel.

I'm in the cabinet locked up,
Like some high-prizèd margarite,
Or like the great mogul or pope,
Am cloistered up from public sight:
Retiredness is a piece of majesty,
And thus, proud sultan, I'm as great as thee.

Here sin for want of food must starve,
Where tempting objects are not seen;
And these strong walls do only serve
To keep vice out, and keep me in.

Malice of late's grown charitable, sure,
I'm not committed, but am kept secure.

So he that struck at Jason's life,
Thinking to' have made his purpose sure,
By a malicious friendly knife
Did only wound him to a cure:
Malice, I see, wants wit; for what is meant
Mischief, ofttimes proves favour by the event.

When once my Prince affliction hath,
Prosperity doth treason seem;
And for to smooth so rough a path,
I can learn patience from him:
Now not to suffer shows no loyal heart,
When kings want ease, subjects must bear a part.

What though I cannot see my King,
Neither in person nor in coin;
Yet contemplation is a thing
That renders what I have not, mine:
My King from me what adamant can part,
Whom I do wear engraven on my heart?

Have you not seen the nightingale,
A pilgrim, coopt into a cage,
How doth she chaunt her wonted tale
In that her narrow hermitage?
Even there her charming melody doth prove
That all her bars are trees, her cage a grove.

I am that bird, whom they combine
Thus to deprive of liberty;
But though they do my corps confine,
Yet, maugre hate, my soul is free:
And though immured, yet can I chirp and sing
Disgrace to rebels, glory to my King.

My soul is free as ambient air,
Although my baser part's immewed,
Whilst loyal thoughts do still repair
To' accompany my solitude:
Although rebellion do my body bind,
My King alone can captivate my mind.

Anon.

CII

A ROYAL LAMENTATION.

Great Monarch of the world, from whose power springs
The potency and power of [earthly] kings,
Record the royal woe my suffering sings.

Nature and law by thy divine decree,
(The only root of righteous royalty,)
With this dim diadem invested me:

With it the sacred sceptre, purple robe,
The holy unction, and the royal globe;
Yet am I levelled with the life of Job.

The fiercest furies, that do daily tread
Upon my grief, my grey discrownèd head,
Are they that owe my bounty for their bread.

With my own power my majesty they wound,
In the King's name the King's himself uncrowned;
So doth the dust destroy the diamond.

They promise to erect my royal stem,
To make me great, to' advance my diadem,
If I will first fall down, and worship them.

My life they prize at such a slender rate,
That in my absence they draw bills of hate,
To prove the King a traitor to the State.

Felons obtain more privilege than I;
They are allowed to answer ere they die:
'Tis death for me to ask the reason why.

But, sacred Saviour, with thy words I woo
Thee to forgive, and not be bitter to
Such as Thou know'st do not know what they do.

Augment my patience, nullify my hate,
Preserve my issue, and inspire my mate;
Yet, though we perish, bless this Church and State.
King Charles the First.

CIII

HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND.

The forward youth that would appear,
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armour's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urgèd his active star:

And like the three-forked lightning first,
Breaking the clouds where it was nurst,
Did thorough his own side
His fiery way divide:

For 'tis all one to courage high
The emulous, or enemy;
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose.

Then burning through the air he went,
And palaces and temples rent;
And Cæsar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry heaven's flame;
And if we would speak true,
Much to the Man is due,

Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reservèd and austere
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot,)

Could by industrious valour climb
To ruin the great work of time,
And cast the Kingdoms old
Into another mould.

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient Rights in vain—
But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak.

Nature, that hateth emptiness,
Allows of penetration less,
And therefore must make room,
Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the Civil War
Where his were not the deepest scar?
And Hampton shows what part
He had of wiser art,

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
That Charles himself might chase
To Carsbrook's narrow case;

That thence the royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armèd bands
Did clap their bloody hands;

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the Gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

—This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the forcèd power:
So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,

A Bleeding Head, where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run;
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate!

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed:
So much one man can do
That does both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confessed
How good he is, how just
And fit for highest trust;

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
But still in the Republic's hand—
How fit he is to sway
That can so well obey!

He to the Commons' feet presents
A Kingdom for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame, to make it theirs:

And has his sword and spoils ungirt
To lay them at the Public's skirt.
So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having killed, no more does search
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure.

—What may not then our Isle presume,
While victory his crest does plume?
What may not others fear,
If thus he crowns each year!

As Cæsar he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all states not free
Shall climacteric be.

The Pict no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-coloured mind,
But from this valour, sad
Shrink underneath the plaid—

Happy, if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake,
Nor lay his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.

But thou, the War's and Fortune's son,
March indefatigably on;
And for the last effect
Still kept the sword erect:

Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night,
The same arts that did gain
A power, must it maintain.

Andrew Marvell.

CIV

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

John Milton.

CV

HYMN TO LIGHT.

First-born of Chaos, who so fair didst come
From the old Negro's darksome womb!
Which, when it saw the lovely child,
The melancholy mass put on kind looks and smiled:

Thou tide of glory which no rest dost know,
But ever ebb and ever flow!
Thou golden shower of a true Jove!
Who does in thee descend, and heaven to earth make love!

Say, from what golden quivers of the sky
Do all thy wingèd arrows fly?
Swiftness and power by birth are thine;
From thy great sire they came, thy sire, the Word Divine.

'Tis, I believe, this archery to show,
That so much cost in colours thou
And skill in painting dost bestow
Upon thy ancient arms, the gaudy heavenly bow.

Swift as light thoughts their empty carriere run,
Thy race is finished when begun;
Let a post-angel start with thee,
And thou the goal of earth shalt reach as soon as he.

Thou in the moon's bright chariot proud and gay
Dost thy bright wood of stars survey;
And all the year dost with thee bring
Of thousand flowery lights thine own nocturnal spring.

Thou, Scythian-like, dost round thy lands, above
The sun's gilt tent, for ever move;
And still as thou in pomp dost go,
The shining pageants of the world attend thy show.

Nor amidst all these triumphs dost thou scorn
The humble glowworms to adorn,
And with those living spangles gild
(O greatness without pride!) the bushes of the field.

Night and her ugly subjects dost thou fright,
And sleep, the lazy owl of night;
Ashamed and fearful to appear,
They screen their horrid shapes with the black hemisphere.

With them there hastes, and wildly takes the alarm,
Of painted dreams a busy swarm;
At the first opening of thine eye
The various clusters break, the antic atoms fly

When, Goddess, thou lift'st up thy wakened head
Out of the Morning's purple bed,
Thy choir of birds about thee play,
And all thy joyful world salutes the rising day.

All the world's bravery that delights our eyes,
Is but thy several liveries;
Thou the rich dye on them bestowest,
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou goest.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st;
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st;
The virgin lilies, in their white,
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.

The violet, spring's little infant, stands
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands;
On the fair tulip thou dost dote,
Thou cloth'st it in a gay and parti-coloured coat.

With flame condensed thou dost thy jewels fix,
And solid colours in it mix:
Flora herself envies to see
Flowers fairer than her own, and durable as she.

Through the soft ways of heaven and air and sea,
Which open all their pores to thee,
Like a clear river thou dost glide,
And with thy living stream through the close channels slide.

But where firm bodies thy free course oppose,
Gently thy source the land o'erflows;
Takes there possession, and does make,
Of colours' mingled light, a thick and standing lake:

But the vast ocean of unbounded day
In the empyrean heaven does stay;
Thy rivers, lakes, and springs below
From thence took first their rise, thither at last must flow.

Abraham Cowley.

CVI

TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

Philosophy! the great and only heir
Of all that human knowledge which has been
Unforfeited by man's rebellious sin,
Though full of years he do appear,
(Philosophy! I say, and call it He,
For whatsoe'er the painter's fancy be,
It a male virtue seems to me)
Has still been kept in nonage till of late,
Nor managed or enjoyed his vast estate.
Three or four thousand years, one would have thought,
To ripeness and perfection might have brought
A science so well bred and nursed,
And of such hopeful parts, too, at the first;
But oh! the guardians and the tutors then,
(Some negligent, some ambitious men)
Would ne'er consent to set him free,
Or his own natural powers to let him see,
Lest that should put an end to their authority.

That his own business he might quite forget,
They' amused him with the sports of wanton wit;
With the deserts of poetry they fed him,
Instead of solid meats to' increase his force;
Instead of vigorous exercise they led him
Into the pleasant labyrinths of ever-fresh discourse:
Instead of carrying him to see
The riches which do hoarded for him lie
In Nature's endless treasury,
They chose his eye to entertain
His curious, but not covetous, eye)
With painted scenes and pageants of the brain.
Some few exalted spirits this latter age has s'own,

That laboured to assert the liberty
(From guardians who were now usurpers grown)
Of this old minor still, captived Philosophy;
But 'twas rebellion called, to fight
For such a long-oppressèd right.
Bacon, at last, a mighty man! arose,
Whom a wise King and Nature chose
Lord Chancellor of both their laws,
And boldly undertook the injured pupil's cause.

Authority, which did a body boast,
Though 'twas but air condensed, and stalked about
Like some old giant's more gigantic ghost,
To terrify the learnèd rout,
With the plain magic of true reason's light
He chased out of our sight,
Nor suffered living men to be misled
By the vain shadows of the dead:
To graves, from whence it rose, the conquered phantom fled.
He broke that monstrous god which stood,
In midst of the orchard, and the whole did claim,
Which with a useless scythe of wood,
And something else not worth a name,
(Ridiculous and senseless terrors!) made
Children and superstitious men afraid.
The orchard's open now, and free:
Bacon has broke that scarecrow deity:
Come, enter all that will,
Behold the ripened fruit, come, gather now your fill!
Yet still, methinks, we fain would be
Catching at the forbidden tree;
We would be like the Deity;
When truth and falsehood, good and evil, we
Without the senses' aid within ourselves would see;
For 'tis God only who can find
All nature in his mind.

From words, which are but pictures of the thought
(Though we our thoughts from them perversely drew,)
To things, the mind's right object, he it brought;
Like foolish birds to painted grapes we flew.
He sought and gathered for our use the true;
And when on heaps the chosen bunches lay,
He pressed them wisely the mechanic way,
Till all their juice did in one vessel join,
Ferment into a nourishment divine,
The thirsty soul's refreshing wine.
Who to the life an exact piece would make,
Must not from others' work a copy take;
No, not from Rubens or Vandyck;
Much less content himself to make it like
The ideas and the images which lie
In his own fancy or his memory:
No, he before his sight must place
The natural and the living face;
The real object must command
Each judgment of his eye and motion of his hand.

From these, and all long errors of the way,
In which our wandering predecessors went,
And, like the old Hebrews, many years did stray
In deserts, but of small extent,
Bacon! like Moses, led us forth at last;
The barren wilderness he passed,
Did on the very border stand
Of the blessed Promised Land,
And from the mountain's top of his exalted wit,
Saw it himself, and showed us it.
But life did never to one man allow
Time to discover worlds, and conquer too;
Nor can so short a line sufficient be
To fathom the vast deeps of Nature's sea:

The work he did we ought to admire,
And were unjust if we should more require
From his few years, divided 'twixt the excess
Of low affliction and high happiness:
For who on things remote can fix his sight,
That's always in a triumph or a fight?

From you, great champions! we expect to get
These spacious countries but discovered yet;
Countries where yet, instead of Nature, we
Her images and idols worshipped see:
These large and wealthy regions to subdue,
Though Learning has whole armies at command,
Quartered about in every land,
A better troop she ne'er together drew.
Methinks, like Gideon's little band,
God with design has picked out you,
To do these noble wonders by a few.
When the whole host He saw, they are, said He,
Too many to o'ercome for Me:
And now He chooses out his men,
Much in the way that He did then:
Not those many, whom He found
Idly extended on the ground,
To drink, with their dejected head,
The stream, just so as by their mouths it fled:
No; but those few who took the waters up,
And made of their laborious hands the cup.

Thus you prepared, and in the glorious fight
Their wondrous pattern too you take:
Their old and empty pitchers first they brake,
And with their hands then lifted up the light.
Io! sound too the trumpets here!
Already your victorious lights appear;
New scenes of heaven already we espy,
And crowds of golden worlds on high,

Which from the spacious plains of earth and sea
Could never yet discovered be
By sailor's or Chaldean's watchful eye.
Nature's great works no distance can obscure,
No smallness her near objects can secure:
You' have taught the curious sight to press
Into the privatest recess
Of her imperceptible littleness:
You' have learned to read her smallest hand,
And well begun her deepest sense to understand.

Mischief and true dishonour fall on those
Who would to laughter or to scorn expose
So virtuous and so noble a design,
So human for its use, for knowledge so divine.
The things which these proud men despise, and call
Impertinent, and vain, and small,
Those smallest things of nature let me know,
Rather than all their greatest actions do.
Whoever would deposèd truth advance
Into the throne usurped from it,
Must feel at first the blows of ignorance,
And the sharp points of envious wit.
So when, by various turns of the celestial dance,
In many thousand years
A star, so long unknown, appears,
Though heaven itself more beauteous by it grow,
It troubles and alarms the world below,
Does to the wise a star, to fools a meteor, show.

With courage and success you the bold work begin;
Your cradle has not idle been;
None e'er but Hercules and you would be
At five years' age worthy a history:
And ne'er did fortune better yet
The historian to the story fit.

As you from all old errors free
And purge the body of Philosophy,
So from all modern follies he
Has vindicated eloquence and wit:
His candid style like a clean stream does slide,
And his bright fancy all the way
Does, like the sunshine, in it play;
It does like Thames, the best of rivers, glide,
Where the god does not rudely overturn,
But gently pour, the crystal urn,
And with judicious hand does the whole current guide.
'T has all the beauties Nature can impart,
And all the comely dress, without the paint, of Art.

Abraham Cowley.

CVII

THE DREAM.

No victor that in battle spent,
When he at night asleep doth lie
Rich in a conquered monarch's tent,
E'er had so vain a dream as I.

Methought I saw the earliest shade
And sweetest that the spring can spread,
Of jasmin, briar, and woodbine made;
And there I saw Clorinda dead.

Though dead she lay, yet could I see
No cypress nor no mourning yew;
Nor yet the injured lover's tree;
No willow near her coffin grew.

But all showed unconcerned to be,
As if just Nature there did strive
To be as pitiless as she
Was to her lover when alive.

And now, methought, I lost all care,
In losing her; and was as free
As birds let loose into the air,
Or rivers that are got to sea.

Methought Love's monarchy was gone;
And whilst elective numbers sway,
Our choice and change makes power our own,
And those court us whom we obey.

Yet soon, now from my Princess free,
I rather frantic grew than glad,
For subjects, getting liberty,
Get but a license to be mad.

Birds that are long in cages awed,
If they get out, awhile will roam;
But straight want skill to live abroad,
Then pine and hover near their home.

And to the ocean rivers run
From being pent in banks of flowers;
Not knowing that the exhaling sun
Will send them back in weeping showers.

Soon thus for pride of liberty
I low desires of bondage found;
And vanity of being free
Bred the discretion to be bound.

But as dull subjects see too late
Their safety in monarchal reign,
Finding their freedom in a State
Is but proud strutting in a chain;

Then growing wiser, when undone,
In winter nights sad stories sing
In praise of monarchs long since gone,
To whom their bells they yearly ring;

So now I mourned that she was dead,
Whose single power did govern me;
And quickly was by reason led
To find the harm of liberty.

Even so the lovers of this land
(Love's empire in Clorinda gone)
Thought they were quit from Love's command,
And beauty's world was all their own.

But lovers, who are Nature's best
Old subjects, never long revolt;
They soon in passion's war contest,
Yet in their march soon make a halt.

And those, when by my mandates brought
Near dead Clorinda, ceased to boast
Of freedom found, and wept for thought
Of their delightful bondage lost.

And now the day to night was turned,
Or sadly night's close mourning wore;
All maids for one another mourned,
That lovers now could love no more.

All lovers quickly did perceive
They had on earth no more to do
Than civilly to take their leave,
As worthies that to dying go.

And now all quires her dirges sing,
In shades of cypress and of yew;
The bells of every temple ring,
Where maids their withered garlands strew.

To such extremes did sorrow rise,
That it transcended speech and form,
And was so lost to ears and eyes
As seamen sinking in a storm.

My soul, in sleep's soft fetters bound,
Did now for vital freedom strive;
And straight, by horror waked, I found
The fair Clorinda still alive.

Yet she's to me but such a light,
As are the stars to those who know,
We can at most but guess their height,
And hope they mind us here below.

Sir William Davenant.

CVIII

THE DIRGE.

What is the existence of man's life
But open war, or slumbered strife?
Where sickness to his sense presents
The combat of the elements;
And never feels a perfect peace,
Till death's cold hand signs his release.

It is a storm, where the hot blood
Outvies in rage the boiling flood;
And each loud passion of the mind
Is like a furious gust of wind,
Which bears his bark with many a wave,
Till he casts anchor in the grave.

It is a flower, which buds and grows,
And withers as the leaves disclose;
Whose spring and fall faint seasons keep,
Like fits of waking before sleep:
Then shrinks into that fatal mould
Where its first being was enrolled.

It is a dream, whose seeming truth
Is moralized in age and youth:

Where all the comforts he can share
As wandering as his fancies are;
Till in the mist of dark decay
The dreamer vanish quite away.

It is a dial, which points out
The sunset, as it moves about:
And shadows out in lines of night
The subtle stages of time's flight,
Till all-obscuring earth hath laid
The body in perpetual shade.

It is a weary interlude,
Which doth short joys, long woes include;
The world the stage, the prologue tears,
The acts vain hope, and varied fears:
The scene shuts up with loss of breath,
And leaves no epilogue but death.

Henry King.

CIX

PARAPHRASE FROM SENECA.

Let him that will, ascend the tottering seat
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great
As are his mounting wishes: as for me,
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be;
Give me some mean obscure recess, a sphere
Out of the road of business, or the fear
Of falling lower; where I sweetly may
Myself and dear retirement still enjoy:
Let not my life or name be known unto
The grandees of the time, tost to and fro
By censures or applause; but let my age
Slide gently by; not overthwart the stage
Of public action; unheard, unseen,
And unconcerned, as if I ne'er had been.

And thus, while I shall pass my silent days
In shady privacy, free from the noise
And bustles of the mad world, then shall I
A good old innocent plebeian die.
Death is a mere surprise, a very snare
To him, that makes it his life's greatest care
To be a public pageant; known to all,
But unacquainted with himself, doth fall.

Sir Matthew Hale.

CX

VANISHED BLESSINGS.

The voice which I did more esteem
  Than music in her sweetest key,
Those eyes which unto me did seem
  More comfortable than the day—
Those now by me, as they have been,
Shall never more be heard or seen;
But what I once enjoyed in them
Shall seem hereafter as a dream.

All earthly comforts vanish thus;
  So little hold of them have we,
That we from them, or they from us,
  May in a moment ravished be.
Yet we are neither just nor wise,
If present mercies we despise;
Or mind not how there may be made
A thankful use of what we had.

George Wither.

CXI

EPITAPH.

In this marble casket lies
A matchless jewel of rich price;
Whom Nature in the world's disdain
But showed, and put it up again.

Anon.

CXII

THE WORLD'S FALLACIES.

False world, thou liest: thou canst not lend
The least delight:
Thy favours cannot gain a friend,
They are so slight:
Thy morning pleasures make an end
To please at night:
Poor are the wants that thou suppliest:
And yet thou vaunt'st, and yet thou viest
With heaven; fond earth, thou boast'st; false world, thou liest.

Thy babbling tongue tells golden tales
Of endless treasure:
Thy bounty offers easy sales
Of lasting pleasure:
Thou ask'st the conscience what she ails,
And swear'st to ease her;
There's none can want where thou suppliest,
There's none can give where thou deniest;
Alas! fond world, thou boast'st; false world, thou liest.

What well-advisèd ear regards
What earth can say?
Thy words are gold, but thy rewards
Are painted clay:
Thy cunning can but pack the cards,
Thou canst not play:
Thy game at weakest, still thou viest;
If seen, and then revied, deniest:
Thou art not what thou seem'st; false world, thou liest.

Thy tinsel bosom seems a mint
Of new-coined treasure;
A paradise, that has no stint,
No change, no measure;
A painted cask, but nothing in't,
Nor wealth, nor pleasure.
Vain earth! that falsely thus compliest
With man; vain man, that thou reliest
On earth: vain man, thou doat'st; vain earth, thou liest.

What mean dull souls in this high measure
To haberdash
In earth's base wares, whose greatest treasure
Is dross and trash;
The height of whose enchanting pleasure
Is but a flash?
Are these the goods that thou suppliest
Us mortals with? Are these the highest?
Can these bring cordial peace? False world, thou liest.

Francis Quarles.

CXIII

TO THE MEMORY OF MR. OLDHAM.

Farewell, too little and too lately known,
Whom I began to think, and call my own;
For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
Cast in the same poetic mould with mine.
One common note on either lyre did strike,
And knaves and fools we both abhorred alike.
To the same goal did both our studies drive;
The last set out, the soonest did arrive.
Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
Whilst his young friend performed, and won the race.
Oh early ripe! to thy abundant store
What could advancing age have added more?

It might (what nature never gives the young)
Have taught the numbers of thy native tongue.
But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.
A noble error, and but seldom made,
When poets are by too much force betrayed;
Thy generous fruits, though gathered ere their prime,
Still showed a quickness; and maturing time
But mellows what we write, to the dull sweets of rhyme.
Once more, hail, and farewell; farewell, thou young,
But, ah too short, Marcellus of our tongue!
Thy brows with ivy and with laurels bound;
But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.

John Dryden.

CXIV

AN EPITAPH ON THE EXCELLENT COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

The chief perfection of both sexes joined,
With neither's vice nor vanity combined;
Of this our age the wonder, love, and care,
The example of the following, and despair;
Such beauty, that from all hearts love must flow,
Such majesty, that none durst tell her so;
A wisdom of so large and potent sway,
Rome's Senate might have wished, her Conclave may:
Which did to earthly thoughts so seldom bow,
Alive she scarce was less in heaven than now;
So void of the least pride, to her alone
These radiant excellencies seemed unknown;
Such once there was; but let thy grief appear,
Reader, there is not: Huntingdon lies here.

Lord Falkland.

CXV

A PAGAN EPITAPH.

In this marble buried lies
Beauty may enrich the skies,
And add light to Phœbus' eyes;

Sweeter than Aurora's air,
When she paints the lilies fair,
And gilds cowslips with her hair;

Chaster than the virgin spring,
Ere her blossoms she doth bring,
Or cause Philomel to sing.

If such goodness live 'mongst men,
Tell me it: I [shall] know then
She is come from heaven again.

Anon.

CXVI

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND,

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
Of death, called life; which us from life doth sever.
Thy works and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best,
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

John Milton.

CXVII

AN EPITAPH UPON HUSBAND AND WIFE, WHO DIED AND WERE BURIED TOGETHER.

To these, whom death again did wed,
This grave's their second marriage-bed;
For though the hand of Fate could force
'Twixt soul and body a divorce,
It could not sunder man and wife,
'Cause they both lived but one life.
Peace, good reader, do not weep;
Peace, the lovers are asleep:
They (sweet turtles) folded lie
In the last knot that love could tie.
And though they lie as they were dead,
Their pillow stone, their sheets of lead;
(Pillow hard, and sheets not warm)
Love made the bed, they'll take no harm.
Let them sleep, let them sleep on,
Till this stormy night be gone,
And the eternal morrow dawn;
Then the curtains will be drawn,
And they wake into that light,
Whose day shall never die in night.

Richard Crashaw.

CXVIII

EPITAPH.

Here lies a piece of Christ; a star in dust;
A vein of gold; a china dish that must
Be used in heaven, when God shall feast the just.

Robert Wild.

CXIX

EPITAPH ON COMPANIONS LEFT BEHIND IN THE NORTHERN SEAS.

I were unkind unless that I did shed,
Before I part, some tears upon our dead:
And when my eyes be dry, I will not cease
In heart to pray their bones may rest in peace:
Their better parts (good souls) I know were given
With an intent they should return to heaven:
Their lives they spent to the last drop of blood,
Seeking God's glory and their country's good.
And as a valiant soldier rather dies,
Than yields his courage to his enemies;
And stops their way with his hewed flesh, when death
Hath quite deprived him of his strength and breath;
So have they spent themselves; and here they lie,
A famous mark of our discovery.
We that survive, perchance may end our days
In some employment meriting no praise;
And in a dung-hill rot, when no man names
The memory of us, but to our shames.
They have outlived this fear, and their brave ends
Will ever be an honour to their friends.
Why drop you so, mine eyes? Nay rather pour
My sad departure in a solemn shower.
The winter's cold, that lately froze our blood,
Now were it so extreme, might do this good,
As make these tears bright pearls, which I would lay
Tombed safely with you till doom's fatal day;
That in this solitary place, where none
Will ever come to breathe a sigh or groan,
Some remnant might be extant of the true
And faithful love I ever tendered you.

Oh! rest in peace, dear friends, and, let it be
No pride to say, the sometime part of me.
What pain and anguish doth afflict the head,
The heart, and stomach, when the limbs are dead;
So grieved, I kiss your graves, and vow to die,
A foster-father to your memory.

Thomas James.

CXX

EPITAPH ON THE LADY MARY VILLIERS.

The Lady Mary Villiers lies
Under this stone: with weeping eyes
The parents that first gave her birth,
And their sad friends, laid her in earth.
If any of them, reader, were
Known unto thee, shed a tear:
Or if thyself possess a gem,
As dear to thee as this to them,
Though a stranger to this place,
Bewail in their's thine own hard case;
For thou perhaps at thy return
Mayst find thy darling in an urn.

Thomas Carew.

CXXI

EXEQUY ON HIS WIFE.

Accept, thou shrine of my dead saint,
Instead of dirges this complaint;
And for sweet flowers to crown thy hearse,
Receive a strew of weeping verse
From thy grieved friend, whom thou might'st see
Quite melted into tears for thee.
Dear loss! since thy untimely fate,
My task hath been to meditate

On thee, on thee: thou art the book,
The library whereon I look,
Though almost blind. For thee, loved clay,
I languish out, not live, the day,
Using no other exercise
But what I practise with mine eyes:
By which wet glasses I find out
How lazily time creeps about
To one that mourns; this, only this,
My exercise and business is:
So I compute the weary hours
With sighs dissolvèd into showers.
Nor wonder if my time go thus
Backward and most preposterous;
Thou hast benighted me; thy set
This eve of blackness did beget,
Who wast my day (though overcast
Before thou hadst thy noontide past),
And I remember must in tears,
Thou scarce hadst seen so many years
As day tells hours. By thy clear sun
My love and fortune first did run;
But thou wilt never more appear
Folded within my hemisphere,
Since both thy light and motion,
Like a fled star, is fall'n and gone,
And 'twixt me and my soul's dear wish
The earth now interposèd is,
Which such a strange eclipse doth make
As ne'er was read in almanack.
I could allow thee for a time
To darken me and my sad clime;
Were it a month, a year, or ten,
I would thy exile live till then;
And all that space my mirth adjourn,
So thou wouldst promise to return;

And putting off thy ashy shroud
At length disperse this sorrow's cloud.
But woe is me! the longest date
Too narrow is to calculate
These empty hopes: never shall I
Be so much blest as to descry
A glimpse of thee, till that day come
Which shall the earth to cinders doom,
And a fierce fever must calcine
The body of this world like thine,
My little world! That fit of fire
Once off, our bodies shall aspire
To our souls' bliss: then we shall rise,
And view ourselves with clearer eyes
In that calm region, where no night
Can hide us from each other's sight.
Meantime, thou hast her, earth: much good
May my harm do thee. Since it stood
With Heaven's will I might not call
Her longer mine, I give thee all
My short-lived right and interest
In her, whom living I loved best:
With a most free and bounteous grief,
I give thee what I could not keep.
Be kind to her, and prithee look
Thou write into thy Doomsday book
Each parcel of this rarity,
Which in thy casket shrined doth lie:
See that thou make thy reckoning straight,
And yield her back again by weight;
For thou must audit on thy trust
Each grain and atom of this dust,
As thou wilt answer him that lent,
Not gave, thee, my dear monument.
So close the ground, and 'bout her shade
Black curtains draw; my bride is laid.

Sleep on, my Love, in thy cold bed
Never to be disquieted!
My last good night! Thou wilt not wake
Till I thy fate shall overtake:
Till age, or grief, or sickness must
Marry my body to that dust
It so much loves; and fill the room
My heart keeps empty in thy tomb.
Stay for me there; I will not fail
To meet thee in that hallow vale.
And think not much of my delay;
I am already on the way,
And follow thee with all the speed
Desire can make, or sorrows breed.
Each minute is a short degree,
And every hour a step towards thee.
At night when I betake to rest,
Next morn I rise nearer my west
Of life, almost by eight hours' sail,
Than when sleep breathed his drowsy gale.
Thus from the sun my bottom steers,
And my day's compass downward bears:
Nor labour I to stem the tide,
Through which to thee I swiftly glide.
'Tis true, with shame and grief I yield,
Thou, like the van, first took'st the field,
And gotten hast the victory
In thus adventuring to die
Before me, whose more years might crave
A just precedence in the grave.
But hark! my pulse, like a soft drum,
Beats my approach, tells thee I come;
And slow howe'er my marches be,
I shall at last sit down by thee.
The thought of this bids me go on,
And wait my dissolution

With hope and comfort. Dear (forgive
The crime) I am content to live
Divided, with but half a heart,
Till we shall meet and never part.

Henry King.

CXXII

EPITAPH.

Our life is only death! time that ensu'th
Is but the death of time that went before;
Youth is the death of childhood, age of youth:
Die once to God, and then thou diest no more.

Anon.

CXXIII

SONNET.

As due by many titles, I resign
Myself to Thee, O God. First I was made
By Thee and for Thee; and, when I was decayed,
Thy blood bought that, the which before was thine:
I am thy son, made with Thyself to shine;
Thy servant, whose pains Thou hast still repaid,
Thy sheep, thine image; and, till I betrayed
Myself, a temple of thy Spirit divine.
Why doth the devil then usurp on me?
Why doth he steal, nay, ravish that's thy right?
Except Thou rise, and for thine own work fight,
Oh! I shall soon despair, when I shall see
That Thou lov'st mankind well, yet wilt not choose me,
And Satan hates me, yet is loth to lose me.

John Donne.

CXXIV

SONNET.

Death, be not proud, though some have callèd thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy picture be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow:
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy' or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally;
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

John Donne.

CXXV

LYCIDAS.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never-sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year:
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn;
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening, bright,
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, oh the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn:
The willows and the hazel copses green
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherds' ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:.
Ay me! I fondly dream!
Had ye been there—for what could that have done
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal Nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus, to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise—
That last infirmity of noble mind—
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. 'But not the praise,'
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears;
'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set-off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives, and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed.'
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,

That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory:
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
'Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?'
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain,)
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake,
'How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;

And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Beside what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said:
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.'
Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells, and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise;
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world:

Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold.
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more;
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean-bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above
In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing and, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still Morn went out with sandals gray;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue;
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

John Milton.

CXXVI

THE CHRISTIAN'S REPLY TO THE PHILOSOPHER.

The good in graves as heavenly seed are sown;
And at the saints' first spring, the general doom,
Will rise, not by degrees, but fully blown;
When all the angels to their harvest come.

Cannot Almighty Heaven (since flowers which pass
Thawed through a still, and there melt mingled too,
Are raised distinct in a poor chymist's glass)
Do more in graves than men in limbecs do?

God bred the arts, to make us more believe
(By seeking nature's covered mysteries,)
His darker works, that faith may thence conceive
He can do more than what our reason sees.

O coward faith! religion's trembling guide!
Whom ev'n the dim-eyed arts must lead to see
What nature only from our sloth does hide,
Causes remote, which faith's dark dangers be.

Religion, ere imposed, should first be taught;
Not seem to dull obedience ready laid,
Then swallowed straight for ease, but long be sought;
And be by reason counselled, though not swayed.

God has enough to human kind disclosed;
Our fleshly garments He a while received,
And walked as if the Godhead were deposed,
Yet could be then but by a few believed.

The faithless Jews will this at doom confess,
Who did suspect Him for his low disguise:
But, if He could have made his virtue less,
He had been more familiar to their eyes.

Frail life! in which, through mists of human breath
We grope for truth, and make our progress slow,
Because by passion blinded; till, by death
Our passions ending, we begin to know.

O reverend death! whose looks can soon advise
Even scornful youth, whilst priests their doctrine waste;
Yet mocks us too, for he does make us wise,
When by his coming our affairs are past.

O harmless death! whom still the valiant brave,
The wise expect, the sorrowful invite,
And all the good embrace, who know the grave
A short dark passage to eternal light.

Sir William Davenant.

CXXVII

MORTIFICATION.

How soon doth man decay!
When clothes are taken from a chest of sweets
To swaddle infants, whose young breath
Scarce knows the way;
Those clouts are little winding-sheets,
Which do consign and send them unto death.

When boys go first to bed,
They step into their voluntary graves;
Sleep binds them fast; only their breath
Makes them not dead.
Successive nights, like rolling waves,
Convey them quickly, who are bound for death.

When youth is frank and free,
And calls for music, while his veins do swell,
All day exchanging mirth and breath
In company;
That music summons to the knell,
Which shall befriend him at the house of death.

When man grows staid and wise,
Getting a house and home, where he may move
Within the circle of his breath,
Schooling his eyes;
That dumb inclosure maketh love
Unto the coffin, that attends his death.

When age grows low and weak,
Marking his grave, and thawing every year,
Till all do melt, and drown his breath,
When he would speak;
A chair or litter shows the bier
Which shall convey him to the house of death.

Man, ere he is aware,
Hath put together a solemnity,
And dressed his hearse, while he has breath
As yet to spare.
Yet, Lord, instruct us so to die,
That all these dyings may be life in death.

George Herbert.

CXXVIII

THE RETREAT.

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first Love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,

And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
Oh how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence the enlightened spirit sees
That shady City of palm-trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came return.

Henry Vaughan.

CXXIX

A DROP OF DEW.

See, how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
Into the blowing roses,
Yet careless of its mansion new,
For the clear region where 'twas born,
Round in itself incloses,
And in its little globe's extent,
Frames, as it can, its native element.
How it the purple flower does slight,
Scarce touching where it lies;
But gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light,

Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere;
Restless it rolls, and unsecure,
Trembling, lest it grow impure;
Till the warm sun pities its pain,
And to the skies exhales it back again.
So the soul, that drop, that ray,
Of the clear fountain of eternal day,
Could it within the human flower be seen,
Remembering still its former height,
Shuns the sweet leaves, the blossoms green;
And, recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater heaven in a heaven less.
In how coy a figure wound,
Every way it turns away:
So the world excluding round,
Yet receiving in the day;
Dark beneath, but bright above;
Here disdaining, there in love.
How loose and easy hence to go;
How girt and ready to ascend;
Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upward bend.
Such did the manna's sacred dew distil,
White and entire, although congealed and chill;
Congealed on earth; but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of the almighty Sun.

Andrew Marvell.

CXXX

PEACE.

My soul, there is a country,
Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a winged sentry,
All skilful in the wars.

There, above noise and danger,
  Sweet peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
  Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious friend,
  And (O my soul, awake!)
Did in pure love descend,
  To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
  There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
  Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges;
  For none can thee secure,
But One who never changes,
  Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

Henry Vaughan.

CXXXI

EVENING HYMN.

The night is come, like to the day;
Depart not Thou, great God, away.
Let not my sins, black as the night,
Eclipse the lustre of thy light.
Keep still in my horizon; for to me
The sun makes not the day, but Thee.
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples sentry keep!
Guard me 'gainst those watchful foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close;
Let no dreams my head infest,
But such as Jacob's temples blest.
While I do rest, my soul advance;
Make me to sleep a holy trance.
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought;

And with as active vigour run
My course as doth the nimble sun.
Sleep is a death; oh! make me try,
By sleeping, what it is to die:
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at last with Thee.
And thus assured, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again:
Oh! come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever.

Sir Thomas Browne.

CXXXII

THE VALEDICTION.

Vain world, what is in thee?
What do poor mortals see,
Which should esteemèd be
Worthy their pleasure?
Is it the mother's womb,
Or sorrows which soon come,
Or a dark grave and tomb,
Which is their treasure?
How dost thou man deceive
By thy vain glory?
Why do they still believe
Thy false history?

Is it children's book and rod,
The labourer's heavy load,
Poverty undertrod,
The world desireth?

Is it distracting cares,
Or heart-tormenting fears,
Or pining grief and tears,
Which man requireth?
Or is it youthful rage,
Or childish toying;
Or is decrepit age
Worth man's enjoying?

Is it deceitful wealth,
Got by care, fraud, or stealth,
Or short uncertain health,
Which thus befool men?
Or do the serpent's lies,
By the world's flatteries
And tempting vanities,
Still overrule them?
Or do they in a dream
Sleep out their season?
Or borne down by lust's stream,
Which conquers reason?

The silly lambs to-day
Pleasantly skip and play,
Whom butchers mean to slay
Perhaps to-morrow;
In a more brutish sort
Do careless sinners sport,
Or in dead sleep still snort,
As near to sorrow;
Till life, not well begun,
Be sadly ended,
And the web they have spun
Can ne'er be mended.

What is the time that's gone,
And what is that to come?
Is it not now as none?
The present stays not.

Time posteth, oh how fast!
Unwelcome death makes haste;
None can call back what's past—
  Judgment delays not.
Though God bring in the light,
  Sinners awake not;
Because hell's out of sight
  They sin forsake not.

Man walks in a vain show;
They know, yet will not know;
Sit still, when they should go;
  But run for shadows;
While they might taste and know
The living streams that flow,
And crop the flowers that grow,
  In Christ's sweet meadows.
Life's better slept away
  Than as they use it;
In sin and drunken play
  Vain men abuse it.

Malignant world, adieu!
Where no foul vice is new—
Only to Satan true,
  God still offended;
Though taught and warned by God,
And his chastising rod,
Keeps still the way that's broad,
  Never amended.
Baptismal vows some make,
  But ne'er perform them;
If angels from heaven spake,
  'Twould not reform them.

They dig for hell beneath,
They labour hard for death,

Run themselves out of breath
To overtake it.
Hell is not had for naught,
Damnation's dearly bought,
And with great labour sought;
They'll not forsake it.
Their souls are Satan's fee—
He'll not abate it;
Grace is refused that's free,
Mad sinners hate it.

Is this the world men choose,
For which they heaven refuse,
And Christ and grace abuse,
And not receive it?
Shall I not guilty be
Of this in some degree,
If hence God would me free,
And I'd not leave it;
My soul, from Sodom fly,
Lest wrath there find thee;
Thy refuge-rest is nigh;
Look not behind thee!

There's none of this ado,
None of the hellish crew;
God's promise is most true,
Boldly believe it.
My friends are gone before,
And I am near the shore;
My soul stands at the door,
O Lord, receive it!
It trusts Christ and his merits,
The dead He raises;
Join it with blessed spirits,
Who sing thy praises.

Richard Baxter.

CXXXIII

HYMN FOR ADVENT; OR CHRIST'S COMING TO JERUSALEM IN TRIUMPH.

Lord, come away,
Why dost Thou stay?
Thy road is ready: and thy paths, made strait,
With longing expectation wait
The consecration of thy beauteous feet.
Ride on triumphantly; behold we lay
Our lusts and proud wills in thy way.
Hosanna! welcome to our hearts. Lord, here
Thou hast a temple too, and full as dear
As that of Sion; and as full of sin;
Nothing but thieves and robbers dwell therein,
Enter, and chase them forth, and cleanse the floor;
Crucify them, that they may never more
Profane that holy place,
Where Thou hast chose to set thy face.
And then if our stiff tongues shall be
Mute in the praises of thy Deity,
The stones out of the temple wall
Shall cry aloud, and call
Hosanna! and thy glorious footsteps greet.

Jeremy Taylor.

CXXXIV

BEYOND THE VEIL.

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy Hope! and high Humility!
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have showed them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death; the jewel of the just,
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know,
At first sight, if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
Her captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that locked her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee,
Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty.

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass;
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

Henry Vaughan.

PART THE THIRD.

CXXXV

ODE ON SOLITUDE.

Happy the man, whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air,
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease,
Together mixed; sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

Alexander Pope.

CXXXVI

STELLA'S BIRTHDAY, 1720.

All travellers at first incline
Where'er they see the fairest sign;
And, if they find the chambers neat,
And like the liquor and the meat,

Will call again, and recommend
The Angel-inn to every friend.
What though the painting grows decayed,
The house will never lose its trade:
Nay, though the treacherous tapster Thomas
Hangs a new Angel two doors from us,
As fine as daubers' hands can make it,
In hopes that strangers may mistake it,
We think it both a shame and sin
To quit the true old Angel-inn.

Now this is Stella's case in fact,
An angel's face a little cracked:
(Could poets or could painters fix
How angels look at thirty-six:)
This drew us in at first to find
In such a form an angel's mind;
And every virtue now supplies
The fainting rays of Stella's eyes.
See at her levee crowding swains,
Whom Stella freely entertains
With breeding, humour, wit, and sense;
And puts them but to small expense;
Their mind so plentifully fills,
And makes such reasonable bills,
So little gets for what she gives,
We really wonder how she lives;
And, had her stock been less, no doubt
She must have long ago run out.

Then who can think we'll quit the place,
When Doll hangs out a newer face?
Or stop and light at Chloe's head,
With scraps and leavings to be fed?

Then, Chloe, still go on to prate
Of thirty-six and thirty-eight;
Pursue your trade of scandal-picking,
Your hints that Stella is no chicken;

Your inuendos, when you tell us
That Stella loves to talk with fellows;
And let me warn you to believe
A truth, for which your soul should grieve;
That, should you live to see the day
When Stella's locks must all be grey,
When age must print a furrowed trace
On every feature of her face;
Though you, and all your senseless tribe,
Could art, or time, or nature bribe,
To make you look like Beauty's Queen,
And hold for ever at fifteen;
No bloom of youth can ever blind
The cracks and wrinkles of your mind:
All men of sense will pass your door,
And crowd to Stella's at fourscore.

Jonathan Swift.

CXXXVII

ON THE PROSPECT OF PLANTING ARTS AND LEARNING IN AMERICA.

The Muse, disgusted at an age and clime
Barren of every glorious theme,
In distant lands now waits a better time,
Producing subjects worthy fame.

In happy climes, where from the genial sun
And virgin earth such scenes ensue,
The force of art by nature seems outdone,
And fancied beauties by the true.

In happy climes, the seat of innocence,
Where nature guides, and virtue rules,
Where men shall not impose for truth and sense
The pedantry of courts and schools.

There shall be sung another Golden Age,
The rise of empire and of arts,
The good and great inspiring epic rage,
The wisest heads and noblest hearts:

Not such as Europe breeds in her decay;
Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heavenly flame did animate her clay,
By future poets shall be sung.

Westward the course of empire take its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

George Berkeley.

CXXXVIII

THE LAWYER'S FAREWELL TO HIS MUSE.

As, by some tyrant's stern command,
A wretch forsakes his native land,
In foreign climes condemned to roam,
An endless exile from his home;
Pensive he treads the destined way;
And dreads to go; nor dares to stay;
Till on some neighbouring mountain's brow
He stops, and turns his eyes below;
There, melting at the well-known view,
Drops a last tear, and bids adieu:
So I, thus doomed from thee to part,
Gay Queen of fancy and of art,
Reluctant move, with doubtful mind,
Oft stop, and often look behind.
Companion of my tender age,
Serenely gay, and sweetly sage,
How blithsome were we wont to rove
By verdant hill, or shady grove,

Where fervent bees with humming voice
Around the honied oak rejoice,
And aged elms with awful bend
In long cathedral walks extend!
Lulled by the lapse of gliding floods,
Cheered by the warbling of the woods,
How blest my days, my thoughts how free,
In sweet society with thee!
Then all was joyous, all was young,
And years unheeded rolled along:
But now the pleasing dream is o'er,
These scenes must charm me now no more.
Lost to the fields, and torn from you,—
Farewell! a long, a last adieu!
Me wrangling courts, and stubborn law,
To smoke, and crowds, and cities draw:
There selfish faction rules the day,
And pride and avarice throng the way;
Diseases taint the murky air,
And midnight conflagrations glare;
Loose revelry, and riot bold,
In frighted streets their orgies hold;
Or, where in silence all is drowned,
Fell murder walks his lonely round;
No room for peace, no room for you;
Adieu, celestial Nymph, adieu!
Shakspeare no more, thy sylvan son,
Nor all the art of Addison,
Pope's heaven-strung lyre, nor Waller's ease,
Nor Milton's mighty self, must please:
Instead of these a formal band,
In furs and coifs, around me stand;
With sounds uncouth and accents dry,
That grate the soul of harmony,
Each pedant sage unlocks his store
Of mystic, dark, discordant lore;

And points with tottering hand the ways
That lead me to the thorny maze.
There, in a winding close retreat,
Is Justice doomed to fix her seat;
There fenced by bulwarks of the law,
She keeps the wondering world in awe;
And there, from vulgar sight retired,
Like eastern queens, is more admired.
O let me pierce the secret shade
Where dwells the venerable maid!
There humbly mark, with reverend awe,
The guardian of Britannia's law;
Unfold with joy her sacred page,
The united boast of many an age;
Where mixed, yet uniform, appears
The wisdom of a thousand years;
In that pure spring the bottom view,
Clear, deep, and regularly true;
And other doctrines thence imbibe
Than lurk within the sordid scribe;
Observe how parts with parts unite
In one harmonious rule of right;
See countless wheels distinctly tend
By various laws to one great end:
While mighty Alfred's piercing soul
Pervades and regulates the whole.
Then welcome business, welcome strife,
Welcome the cares, the thorns of life,
The visage wan, the pore-blind sight,
The toil by day, the lamp at night,
The tedious forms, the solemn prate,
The pert dispute, the dull debate,
The drowsy bench, the babbling hall,
For thee, fair Justice, welcome all!
Thus though my noon of life be passed,
Yet let my setting sun, at last,

Find out the still, the rural cell,
Where sage Retirement loves to dwell!
There let me taste the homefelt bliss
Of innocence, and inward peace;
Untainted by the guilty bribe,
Uncursed amid the harpy tribe;
No orphan's cry to wound my ear;
My honour and my conscience clear;
Thus may I calmly meet my end,
Thus to the grave in peace descend.

Sir William Blackstone.

CXXXIX

THE JUGGLERS.

A Juggler long through all the town
Had rais'd his fortune and renown;
You'd think (so far his art transcends)
The devil at his fingers' ends.
Vice heard his fame, she read his bill;
Convinced of his inferior skill,
She sought his booth, and from the crowd
Defied the man of art aloud.
'Is this then he so famed for sleight?
Can this slow bungler cheat your sight?
Dares he with me dispute the prize?
I leave it to impartial eyes.'
Provoked, the Juggler cried, 'Tis done;
In science I submit to none.'
Thus said, the cups and balls he played;
By turns this here, that there, conveyed.
The cards, obedient to his words,
Are by a fillip turned to birds.
His little boxes change the grain:
Trick after trick deludes the train.

He shakes his bag, he shows all fair;
His fingers spread, and nothing there;
Then bids it rain with showers of gold;
And now his ivory eggs are told;
But, when from thence the hen he draws,
Amazed spectators hum applause.
Vice now stept forth, and took the place,
With all the forms of his grimace.
'This magic looking-glass,' she cries,
'(There, hand it round) will charm your eyes.'
Each eager eye the sight desired,
And every man himself admired.
Next, to a senator addressing,
'See this bank-note; observe the blessing.
Breathe on the bill. Heigh, pass! 'tis gone.'
Upon his lips a padlock shown.
A second puff the magic broke;
The padlock vanished, and he spoke.
Twelve bottles ranged upon the board,
All full, with heady liquor stored,
By clean conveyance disappear,
And now two bloody swords are there.
A purse she to a thief exposed;
At once his ready fingers closed.
He opes his fist, the treasure's fled:
He sees a halter in its stead.
She bids Ambition hold a wand;
He grasps a hatchet in his hand.
A box of charity she shows.
'Blow here;' and a churchwarden blows.
'Tis vanish'd with conveyance neat,
And on the table smokes a treat.
She shakes the dice, the board she knocks,
And from all pockets fills her box.
A counter, in a miser's hand,
Grew twenty guineas at command.

She bids his heir the sum retain,
And 'tis a counter now again.
A guinea with her touch you see
Take every shape but Charity;
And not one thing you saw, or drew,
But changed from what was first in view.
The Juggler now, in grief of heart,
With this submission owned her art:
'Can I such matchless sleight withstand?
How practice hath improved your hand!
But now and then I cheat the throng;
You every day, and all day long.'

John Gay.

CXL

RULE BRITANNIA.

When Britain first at Heaven's command
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of her land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves.

The nations not so blest as thee
Must in their turn to tyrants fall,
Whilst thou shalt flourish great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
And work their woe and thy renown.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine!

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle, with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair:—
Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never shall be slaves!

James Thomson.

CXLI

ADMIRAL HOSIER'S GHOST.

ON THE TAKING OF PORTO-BELLO BY ADMIRAL VERNON. NOV. 22, 1739.

As near Porto-Bello lying
On the gently swelling flood,
At midnight with streamers flying
Our triumphant navy rode:
There while Vernon sat all-glorious
From the Spaniards' late defeat;
And his crews, with shouts victorious,
Drank success to England's fleet;

On a sudden, shrilly sounding,
Hideous yells and shrieks were heard;
Then each heart with fear confounding,
A sad troop of ghosts appeared,
All in dreary hammocks shrouded,
Which for winding-sheets they wore,
And with looks by sorrow clouded,
Frowning on that hostile shore.

On them gleamed the moon's wan lustre,
When the shade of Hosier brave
His pale bands was seen to muster,
Rising from their watery grave:
O'er the glimmering wave he hied him,
Where the Burford reared her sail,
With three thousand ghosts beside him,
And in groans did Vernon hail:

'Heed, O heed, our fatal story.
I am Hosier's injured ghost,
You, who now have purchased glory
At this place where I was lost;
Though in Porto-Bello's ruin
You now triumph free from fears,
When you think on our undoing,
You will mix your joy with tears.

'See these mournful spectres, sweeping
Ghastly o'er this hated wave,
Whose wan cheeks are stained with weeping;
These were English captains brave:
Mark those numbers pale and horrid,
Those were once my sailors bold,
Lo! each hangs his drooping forehead,
While his dismal tale is told.

'I, by twenty sail attended,
Did this Spanish town affright:
Nothing then its wealth defended
But my orders not to fight:
Oh! that in this rolling ocean
I had cast them with disdain,
And obeyed my heart's warm motion,
To have quelled the pride of Spain.

'For resistance I could fear none,
But with twenty ships had done

What thou, brave and happy Vernon,
Hast achieved with six alone.
Then the Bastimentos never
Had our foul dishonour seen,
Nor the sea the sad receiver
Of this gallant train had been.

'Thus, like thee, proud Spain dismaying,
And her galleons leading home,
Though condemned for disobeying,
I had met a traitor's doom;
To have fall'n, my country crying
He has played an English part,
Had been better far than dying
Of a grieved and broken heart.

'Unrepining at thy glory,
Thy successful arms we hail;
But remember our sad story,
And let Hosier's wrongs prevail;
Sent in this foul clime to languish,
Think what thousands fell in vain,
Wasted with disease and anguish,
Not in glorious battle slain.

'Hence, with all my train attending
From their oozy tombs below,
Through the hoary foam ascending,
Here I feed my constant woe:
Here the Bastimentos viewing,
We recall our shameful doom,
And our plaintive cries renewing,
Wander through the midnight gloom.

'O'er these waves for ever mourning
Shall we roam, deprived of rest,
If to Britain's shores returning,
You neglect my just request.

After this proud foe subduing,
When your patriot friends you see,
Think on vengeance for my ruin,
And for England shamed in me.'

Richard Glover.

CXLII

LAMENT FOR FLODDEN.

I've heard them lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses a' lilting before dawn o' day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At bughts, in the morning, nae blythe lads are scorning,
Lassies are lonely and dowie and wae;
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglin, and hies her away.

In har'st, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
Bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray;
At fair or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, in the gloaming, nae younkers are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are wedded away.

'Dool and wae for the order, sent our lads to the Border!
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that fought aye the foremost,
The prime of our land, are cauld in the clay.

We'll hear nae mair lilting at the ewe-milking;
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Jane Elliott.

CXLIII

WAE'S ME FOR PRINCE CHARLIE.

A wee bird came to our ha' door;
He warbled sweet and clearly;
And aye the o'ercome o' his sang
Was 'Wae's me for Prince Charlie!'
Oh! when I heard the bonny, bonny bird,
The tears came drapping rarely;
I took my bonnet aff my head,
For weel I lo'ed Prince Charlie.

Quoth I; 'My bird, my bonny, bonny bird,
Is that a tale ye borrow?
Or is't some words ye've learned by rote,
Or a lilt o' dool and sorrow?'
'Oh no, no, no,' the wee bird sang,
'I've flown sin' morning early;
But sic a day o' wind and rain—
Oh wae's me for Prince Charlie!

'O'er hills that are by right his ain
He roams a lonely stranger;
On ilka hand he's pressed by want,
On ilka side by danger.
Yestreen I met him in the glen,
My heart near bursted fairly:
For sadly changed indeed was he—
Oh! wae's me for Prince Charlie!

'Dark night came on; the tempest howled
Out owre the hills and valleys;
And whare was't that your Prince lay down,
Whase hame should be a palace?

He rowed him in a Highland plaid,
Which covered him but sparely,
And slept beneath a bush o' broom—
Oh! wae's me for Prince Charlie!'

But now the bird saw some red coats,
And he shook his wings wi' anger:
'Oh, this is no a land for me—
I'll tarry here nae langer.'
A while he hovered on the wing,
Ere he departed fairly;
But weel I mind the farewell strain—
'Twas 'Wae's me for Prince Charlie!'

William Glen.

CXLIV

AN ODE.

IN IMITATION OF ALCÆUS.

What constitutes a State?
Not high-raised battlement or laboured mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crowned;
Not bays and broad-armed ports,
Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;
Not starred and spangled courts,
Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.
No:—men, high-minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued
In forest, brake, or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude;
Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights, and, knowing, dare maintain,
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain:

These constitute a State,
And sovereign Law, that State's collected will,
O'er thrones and globes elate,
Sits Empress, crowning good, repressing ill.
Smit by her sacred frown,
The fiend, Dissension, like a vapour sinks,
And e'en the all-dazzling Crown
Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks.
Such was this heaven-loved isle,
Than Lesbos fairer and the Cretan shore!
No more shall Freedom smile?
Shall Britons languish, and be men no more?
Since all must life resign,
Those sweet rewards, which decorate the brave,
'Tis folly to decline,
And steal inglorious to the silent grave.

Sir William Jones.

CXLV

ODE.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1746.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

William Collins.

CXLVI

ODE TO THE CUCKOO.

Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

The schoolboy, wandering through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts, the new voice of spring to hear,
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another spring to hail.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year!

Oh could I fly, I'd fly with thee!
We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the spring.

John Logan

CXLVII

ODE TO EVENING.

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O Nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired Sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum;
Now teach me, Maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene;
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or, if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name!

William Collins.

CXLVIII

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet
Wi' speckled breast,
When upward-springing, blithe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm;
Scarce reared above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield,
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod, or stane,
Adorns the histie stubble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet floweret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless-starred!

Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He, ruined, sink!

Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom.

Robert Burns.

CXLIX

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire,
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear,
To warm their little loves the birds complain;
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

Thomas Gray.

CL

TO THE HONOURABLE MISS CARTERET.

Bloom of beauty, early flower
Of the blissful bridal bower,
Thou, thy parents' pride and care,
Fairest offspring of the fair,
Lovely pledge of mutual love,
Angel seeming from above,
Was it not thou day by day
Dost thy very sex betray,
Female more and more appear,
Female, more than angel dear,
How to speak thy face and mien,
(Soon too dangerous to be seen)
How shall I, or shall the Muse,
Language of resemblance choose,
Language like thy mien and face,
Full of sweetness, full of grace?
By the next returning spring,
When again the linnets sing,
When again the lambkins play,
Prétty sportlings full of May,
When the meadows next are seen,
Sweet enamel, white and green,
And the year in fresh attire
Welcomes every gay desire,
Blooming on shalt thou appear
More inviting than the year,
Fairer sight than orchard shows,
Which beside a river blows:
Yet another spring I see,
And a brighter bloom in thee:
And another round of time,
Circling, still improves thy prime:

And beneath the vernal skies
Yet a verdure more shall rise,
Ere thy beauties, kindling slow,
In each finished feature glow,
Ere in smiles and in disdain
Thou exert thy maiden reign,
Absolute to save or kill
Fond beholders at thy will.
Happy thrice, and thrice again,
Happiest he of happy men,
Who, in courtship greatly sped,
Wins the damsel to his bed,
Bears the virgin prize away,
Counting life one nuptial day:
For the dark-brown dusk of hair,
Shadowing thick thy forehead fair,
Down the veiny temples growing,
O'er the sloping shoulders flowing,
And the smoothly penciled brow,
Mild to him in every vow,
And the fringèd lid below,
Thin as thinnest blossoms blow,
And the hazely-lucid eye,
Whence heart-winning glances fly,
And that cheek of health, o'erspread
With soft-blended white and red,
And the witching smiles which break
Round those lips, which sweetly speak,
And thy gentleness of mind,
Gentle from a gentle kind,
These endowments, heavenly dower!
Brought him in the promised hour,
Shall for ever bind him to thee,
Shall renew him still to woo thee.

Ambrose Philips.

CLI

TO MISS GEORGIANA CARTERET.

Little charm of placid mien,
Miniature of Beauty's Queen,
Numbering years, a scanty nine,
Stealing hearts without design,
Young inveigler, fond in wiles,
Prone to mirth, profuse in smiles,
Yet a novice in disdain,
Pleasure giving without pain,
Still caressing, still caressed,
Thou and all thy lovers blessed,
Never teased, and never teasing,
Oh for ever pleased and pleasing!
Hither, British Muse of mine,
Hither, all the Grecian Nine,
With the lovely Graces Three,
And your promised nursling see:
Figure on her waxen mind
Images of life refined;
Make it as a garden gay,
Every bud of thought display,
Till, improving year by year,
The whole culture shall appear,
Voice, and speech, and action, rising,
All to human sense surprising.
Is the silken web so thin
As the texture of her skin?
Can the lily and the rose
Such unsullied hue disclose?
Are the violets so blue
As her veins exposed to view?
Do the stars in wintry sky
Twinkle brighter than her eye?

Has the morning lark a throat
Sounding sweeter than her note?
Who e'er knew the like before thee?
They who knew the nymph that bore thee.
From thy pastime and thy toys,
From thy harmless cares and joys,
Give me now a moment's time:
When thou shalt attain thy prime,
And thy bosom feel desire,
Love the likeness of thy sire,
One ordained through life to prove
Still thy glory, still thy love.
Like thy sister, and like thee,
Let thy nurtured daughters be:
Semblance of the fair who bore thee,
Trace the pattern set before thee.
Where the Liffy meets the main,
Has thy sister heard my strain:
From the Liffy to the Thames,
Minstrel echoes, sing their names,
Wafting to the willing ear
Many a cadence sweet to hear,
Smooth as gently breathing gales
O'er the ocean and the vales,
While the vessel calmly glides
O'er the level glassy tides,
While the summer flowers are springing,
And the new-fledged birds are singing.

Ambrose Philips.

CLII

THE DYING LOVER.

Dear Love, let me this evening die,
Oh smile not to prevent it;
Dead with my rivals let me lie,
Or we shall both repent it.

Frown quickly then, and break my heart,
That so my way of dying
May, though my life was full of smart,
Be worth the world's envying.

Some, striving knowledge to refine,
Consume themselves with thinking;
And some, who friendship seal in wine,
Are kindly killed with drinking.
And some are wrecked on the Indian coast,
Thither by gain invited;
Some are in smoke of battle lost,
Whom drums, not lutes, delighted.

Alas! how poorly these depart,
Their graves still unattended!
Who dies not of a broken heart
Is not of Death commended.
His memory is only sweet,
All praise and pity moving,
Who kindly at his mistress' feet
Does die with over-loving.

And now thou frown'st, and now I die,
My corpse by lovers followed;
Which straight shall by dead lovers lie;
That ground is only hallowed.
If priests are grieved I have a grave,
My death not well approving,
The poets my estate shall have,
To teach them the Art of Loving.

And now let lovers ring their bells
For me, poor youth departed,
Who kindly in his love excels,
By dying broken-hearted.

My grave with flowers let lovers strow,
  Which, if thy tears fall near them,
May so transcend in scent and show,
  As thou wilt shortly wear them.

Such flowers how much will florists prize,
  On lover's grave that growing,
Are watered by his mistress' eyes,
  With pity ever-flowing.
A grave so deckt will, though thou art
  Yet fearful to come nigh me,
Provoke thee straight to break thy heart,
  And lie down boldly by me.

Then everywhere all bells shall ring,
  All light to darkness turning;
While every quire shall sadly sing,
  And nature's self wear mourning.
Yet we hereafter may be found,
  By destiny's right placing,
Making, like flowers, love underground,
  Whose roots are still embracing.

Sir William Davenant.

CLIII

THE SAILOR'S RETURN.

And are ye sure the news is true?
  And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to think o' wark?
  Ye jades, lay by your wheel;
Is this the time to spin a thread,
  When Colin's at the door?
Reach down my cloak, I'll to the quay,
  And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck about the house,
  There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house,
  When our gudeman's awa'.

And gie to me my bigonet,
My bishop's satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
That Colin's in the town.
My Turkey slippers maun gae on,
My stockins pearly blue;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak a clean fireside,
Put on the muckle pot;
Gie little Kate her button gown
And Jock his Sunday coat;
And mak their shoon as black as slaes,
Their hose as white as snaw;
It's a' to please my ain gudeman,
For he's been long awa.

There's twa fat hens upo' the coop
Been fed this month and mair;
Mak haste and thraw their necks about,
That Colin weel may fare;
And spread the table neat and clean,
Gar ilka thing look braw,
For wha can tell how Colin fared
When he was far awa?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
His breath like caller air;
His very foot has music in't
As he comes up the stair—
And will I see his face again?
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
I hae nae mair to crave:

And gin I live to keep him sae,
I'm blest aboon the lave:
And will I see his face again,
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet.
For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house,
When our gudeman's awa'.

William Julius Mickle.

CLIV

THE BANKS OF DOON.

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love;
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frae aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns.

CLV .

THE BRAES OF YARROW.

A. 'Busk ye, busk ye, my bonnie, bonnie bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow,
Busk ye, busk ye, my bonnie, bonnie bride,
And think nae mair of the braes of Yarrow.'

B. 'Where gat ye that bonnie, bonnie bride,
Where gat ye that winsome marrow?'
A. 'I gat her where I daurna weel be seen,
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow.'

'Weep not, weep not, my bonnie, bonnie bride,
Weep not, weep not, my winsome marrow,
Nor let thy heart lament to leave
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow.'

B. 'Why does she weep, thy bonnie, bonnie bride?
Why does she weep, thy winsome marrow?
And why daur ye nae mair weel be seen
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow?'

A. 'Lang maun she weep, lang lang maun she weep,
Lang maun she weep wi' dule and sorrow,
And lang maun I nae mair weel be seen
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow.

'For she has tint her lover dear,
Her lover dear, the cause of sorrow;
And I ha'e slain the comeliest swain
That ever pu'ed birks on the braes of Yarrow.

'Why runs thy stream, O Yarrow, reid?
Why on thy braes heard the voice of sorrow?
And why yon melancholious weeds,
Hung or. the bonnie birks of Yarrow?

'What's yonder floats on the rueful flood?
What's yonder floats? Oh, dule and sorrow!
Oh! 'tis the comely swain I slew
Upon the duleful banks of Yarrow!

'Wash, oh, wash his wounds in tears,
His wounds in tears of dule and sorrow,
And wrap his limbs in mourning weeds,
And lay him on the banks of Yarrow!

'Then build, then build, ye sisters sad,
Ye sisters sad, his tomb wi' sorrow,
And weep around in waeful wise,
His helpless fate on the braes of Yarrow.

'Curse ye, curse ye his useless shield,
The arm that wrought the deed of sorrow,
The fatal spear that pierced his breast,
His comely breast, on the braes of Yarrow.

'Did I not warn thee not to love,
And warn from fight? but, to my sorrow,
Too rashly bold, a stronger arm
Thou met'st, and fell on the braes of Yarrow.

'Sweet smells the birk; green grows the grass,
Yellow on Yarrow's braes the gowan,
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
Sweet the wave of Yarrow flowin'.

'Flows Yarrow sweet? as sweet flows Tweed,
As green its grass, its gowan as yellow,
As sweet smells on its braes the birk,
The apple from its rocks as mellow.

'Fair was thy love! fair, fair indeed thy love!
In flowery bands thou didst him fetter;
Though he was fair, and well-beloved again,
Than me he never loved thee better.

'Busk ye, then, busk, my bonnie, bonnie bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow,
Busk ye, and lo'e me on the banks of Tweed,
And think nae mair on the braes of Yarrow.'

C. 'How can I busk, a bonnie, bonnie bride,
How can I busk, a winsome marrow?
How lo'e him on the banks of Tweed,
That slew my Love on the braes of Yarrow?

'Oh, Yarrow fields! may never rain,
Nor dew thy tender blossoms cover,
For there was basely slain my Love,
My Love, as he had not been a lover!

'The boy put on his robes of green,
His purple vest, 'twas my ain sewin':
Ah, wretched me! I little, little knew,
He was in these to meet his ruin.

'The boy took out his milk-white steed,
Unmindful of my dule and sorrow;
But, ere the toofal of the night,
He lay a corpse on the banks of Yarrow.

'Much I rejoiced that waeful day,
I sang, my voice the woods returning;
But lang ere night the spear was flown
That slew my Love, and left me mourning.

'What can my barbarous father do,
But with his cruel rage pursue me?
My lover's blood is on thy spear;
How canst thou, barbarous man, then woo me?

'My happy sisters may be proud;
With cruel and ungentle scoffing
May bid me seek on Yarrow's braes
My lover nailèd in his coffin.

'My brother Douglas may upbraid,
And strive with threatening words to move me;
My lover's blude is on thy spear,
How canst thou ever bid me love thee?

'Yes, yes, prepare the bed, the bed of love,
With bridal-sheets my body cover;
Unbar, ye bridal maids, the door,
Let in the expected husband-lover!

'But who the expected husband is?
His hands, methinks, are bathed in slaughter.
Ah me! what ghastly spectre's yon,
Comes in his pale shroud bleeding after?

'Pale as he is, here lay him down,
Oh, lay his cold head on my pillow!
Take aff, take aff these bridal weeds,
And crown my careful head with willow.

'Pale though thou art, yet best beloved,
Oh, could my warmth to life restore thee!
Yet lie all night between my breasts;
No youth lay ever there before thee.

'Pale, pale indeed, O lovely youth!
Forgive, forgive so foul a slaughter,
And lie all night between my breasts;
No youth shall ever lie there after.'

A. Return, return, O mournful bride!
Return, and dry thy useless sorrow:
Thy lover heeds naught of thy sighs;
He lies a corpse on the braes of Yarrow!

William Hamilton.

CLVI

AULD ROBIN GRAY.

When the sheep are in the fauld, and the kye at hame,
And a' the warld to rest are gane,
The waes o' my heart fa' in showers frae my e'e,
While my gudeman lies sound by me.

Young Jamie lo'ed me weel, and sought me for his bride;
But saving a croun he had naething else beside:
To make the croun a pund, young Jamie gaed to sea;
And the croun and the pund were baith for me.

He hadna been awa' a week but only twa,
When my father brak his arm, and the cow was stown awa;
My mother she fell sick, and my Jamie at the sea—
And auld Robin Gray came a-courtin' me.

My father couldna work, and my mother couldna spin;
I toiled day and night, but their bread I couldna win;
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and wi' tears in his e'e
Said, Jennie, for their sakes, oh marry me!

My heart it said nay; I looked for Jamie back;
But the wind it blew high, and the ship it was a wrack;
His ship it was a wrack—why didna Jamie dee?
Or why do I live to cry, Wae's me?

My father urgit sair: my mother didna speak;
But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break:
They gi'ed him my hand, but my heart was at the sea;
Sae auld Robin Gray he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been a wife a week but only four,
When mournfu' as I sat on the stane at the door,
I saw my Jamie's wraith, for I couldna think it he—
Till he said, 'I'm come hame to marry thee.

O sair, sair did we greet, and muckle did we say;
We took but ae kiss, and I bad him gang away:
I wish that I were dead, but I'm no like to dee;
And why was I born to say, Wae's me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena to spin;
I daurna think on Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
But I'll do my best a gude wife aye to be
For auld Robin Gray he is kind unto me.

Lady Anne Lindsay.

CLVII

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

A PINDARIC ODE.

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow,
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour:
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

O Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares
And frantic Passions hear thy soft control:
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand

Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay;
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day,
With antic Sports, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow-melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns, the Graces homage pay:
With arms sublime that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

Man's feeble race what ills await,
Labour and penury, the racks of pain,
Disease, and sorrow's weeping train,
And death, sad refuge from the storms of fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky;
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,

The Muse has broke the twilight gloom,
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
The unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

Woods that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion, next thy sea-encircled coast.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless Child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
'This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year:

Thine, too, these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears.'

Nor second he, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,
The secrets of the abyss to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder clothed, and long resounding pace.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah! 'tis heard no more—
O lyre divine, what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? Though he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban Eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air:
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far!—but far above the great.

Thomas Gray.

CLVIII

SONNET.

When I behold thee, blameless Williamson,
Wrecked like an infant on a savage shore,
While others round on borrowed pinions soar,
My busy fancy calls thy thread misspun;
Till Faith instructs me the deceit to shun,
While thus she speaks,—'Those wings that from the store
Of virtue were not lent, howe'er they bore
In this gross air, will melt when near the sun.
The truly' ambitious wait for nature's time,
Content by certain, though by slow, degrees
To mount above the reach of vulgar flight;
Nor is that man confined to this low clime,
Who but the extremest skirts of glory sees,
And hears celestial echoes with delight.'

Benjamin Stillingfleet.

CLIX

TO THE RIVER LODON.

Ah! what a weary race my feet have run,
Since first I trod thy banks with alders crowned,
And thought my way was all through fairy ground,
Beneath thy azure sky and golden sun;
Where first my Muse to lisp her notes begun!
While pensive Memory traces back the round
Which fills the varied interval between,
Much pleasure, more of sorrow, marks the scene.
Sweet native stream! those skies and suns so pure
No more return, to cheer my evening road;
Yet still one joy remains—that not obscure,
Nor useless, all my vacant days have flowed,
From youth's gay dawn to manhood's prime mature,
Nor with the Muse's laurel unbestowed.

Thomas Warton.

CLX

TO MARY UNWIN.

Mary! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from heaven as some have feigned they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings:—
But thou hast little need. There is a Book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright—
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
And since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

William Cowper.

CLXI

TO THE SAME.

The twentieth year is well nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast;
Ah would that this might be the last,
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow—
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language uttered in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently pressed, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two; yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though pressed with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last—
My Mary!

William Cowper.

CLXII

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK, ON THE DEATH OF ADDISON.

If, dumb too long, the drooping Muse hath stayed,
And left her debt to Addison unpaid,
Blame not her silence, Warwick, but bemoan,
And judge, oh judge, my bosom by your own.
What mourner ever felt poetic fires!
Slow comes the verse that real woe inspires:
Grief unaffected suits but ill with art,
Or flowing numbers with a bleeding heart.
Can I forget the dismal night that gave
My soul's best part for ever to the grave!
How silent did his old companions tread,
By midnight lamps, the mansions of the dead,
Through breathing statues, then unheeded things,
Through rows of warriors, and through walks of kings!
What awe did the slow solemn knell inspire;
The pealing organ, and the pausing choir;
The duties by the lawn-robed prelate paid;
And the last words that dust to dust conveyed!
While speechless o'er thy closing grave we bend,
Accept these tears, thou dear departed friend.
Oh, gone for ever! take this long adieu;
And sleep in peace, next thy loved Montague.

To strew fresh laurels let the task be mine,
A frequent pilgrim at thy sacred shrine;
Mine with true sighs thy absence to bemoan,
And grave with faithful epitaphs thy stone.
If e'er from me thy loved memorial part,
May shame afflict this alienated heart;
Of thee forgetful if I form a song,
My lyre be broken, and untuned my tongue,
My grief be doubled, from thy image free,
And mirth a torment, unchastised by thee.
  Oft let me range the gloomy aisles alone,
Sad luxury! to vulgar minds unknown,
Along the walls where speaking marbles show
What worthies form the hallowed mould below;
Proud names, who once the reins of empire held;
In arms who triumphed; or in arts excelled;
Chiefs, graced with scars, and prodigal of blood;
Stern patriots, who for sacred freedom stood;
Just men, by whom impartial laws were given;
And saints who taught, and led, the way to heaven.
Ne'er to these chambers, where the mighty rest,
Since their foundation, came a nobler guest;
Nor e'er was to the bowers of bliss conveyed
A fairer spirit or more welcome shade.
  In what new region, to the just assigned,
What new employments please the unbodied mind?
A winged Virtue, through the ethereal sky,
From world to world unwearied does he fly?
Or curious trace the long laborious maze
Of Heaven's decrees, where wondering angels gaze?
Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
How Michael battled, and the dragon fell;
Or, mixed with milder cherubim, to glow
In hymns of love, not ill essayed below?
Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?

Oh! if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thy aid, thou guardian Genius, lend!
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.

That awful form, which, so the Heavens decree,
Must still be loved and still deplored by me,
In nightly visions seldom fails to rise,
Or, roused by Fancy, meets my waking eyes.
If business calls, or crowded courts invite,
The unblemished statesman seems to strike my sight;
If in the stage I seek to soothe my care,
I meet his soul which breathes in Cato there;
If pensive to the rural shades I rove,
His shape o'ertakes me in the lonely grove;
'Twas there of just and good he reasoned strong,
Cleared some great truth, or raised some serious song:
There patient showed us the wise course to steer,
A candid censor, and a friend severe;
There taught us how to live; and (oh! too high
The price for knowledge) taught us how to die.

Thou Hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick's noble race,
Why, once so loved, whene'er thy bower appears,
O'er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears!
How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks, and unpolluted air!
How sweet the glooms beneath thy aged trees,
Thy noon-tide shadow, and thy evening breeze!
His image thy forsaken bowers restore;
Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more;
No more the summer in thy glooms allayed,
Thy evening breezes, and thy noon-day shade.

From other ills, however Fortune frowned;
Some refuge in the Muse's art I found:
Reluctant now I touch the trembling string,
Bereft of him who taught me how to sing;
And these sad accents, murmured o'er his urn,
Betray that absence they attempt to mourn.
Oh must I then (now fresh my bosom bleeds,
And Craggs in death to Addison succeeds)
The verse, begun to one lost friend, prolong,
And weep a second in the unfinished song!
These works divine, which, on his death-bed laid,
To thee, O Craggs, the expiring sage conveyed,
Great, but ill-omened, monument of fame,
Nor he survived to give, nor thou to claim.
Swift after him thy social spirit flies,
And close to his, how soon! thy coffin lies.
Blest pair! whose union future bards shall tell
In future tongues: each other's boast! farewell,
Farewell! whom joined in fame, in friendship tried,
No chance could sever, nor the grave divide.

Thomas Tickell.

CLXIII

ELEGY TO THE MEMORY OF AN UNFORTUNATE LADY.

What beckoning ghost, along the moonlight shade,
Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gored,
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?
Oh ever beauteous, ever friendly! tell,
Is it, in heaven, a crime to love too well?
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,
To act a lover's, or a Roman's part?
Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?

Why bade ye else, ye Powers! her soul aspire
Above the vulgar flight of low desire?
Ambition first sprung from your blest abodes:
The glorious fault of angels and of gods:
Thence to their images on earth it flows,
And in the breasts of kings and heroes glows.
Most souls, 'tis true, but peep out once an age,
Dull sullen prisoners in the body's cage:
Dim lights of life, that burn a length of years,
Useless, unseen, as lamps in sepulchres;
Like eastern kings a lazy state they keep,
And, close confined to their own palace, sleep.
From these perhaps (ere nature bade her die)
Fate snatched her early to the pitying sky.
As into air the purer spirits flow,
And separate from their kindred dregs below;
So flew the soul to its congenial place,
Nor left one virtue to redeem her race.
But thou, false guardian of a charge too good,
Thou, mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
These cheeks now fading at the blast of death;
Cold is that breast which warmed the world before,
And those love-darting eyes must roll no more.
Thus, if eternal justice rules the ball,
Thus shall your wives, and thus your children fall:
On all the line a sudden vengeance waits,
And frequent hearses shall besiege your gates;
There passengers shall stand, and pointing say,
(While the long funerals blacken all the way)
Lo! these were they, whose souls the Furies steeled,
And curst with hearts unknowing how to yield.
Thus unlamented pass the proud away,
The gaze of fools, and pageant of a day!
So perish all, whose breast ne'er learned to glow
For others' good, or melt at others' woe.

What can atone (O ever injured shade!)
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid?
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier:
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned,
By strangers honoured, and by strangers mourned!
What though no friends in sable weeds appear;
Grieve for an hour, perhaps, then mourn a year,
And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances, and the public show?
What though no weeping Loves thy ashes grace,
Nor polished marble emulate thy face?
What though no sacred earth allow thee room,
Nor hallowed dirge be muttered o'er thy tomb?
Yet shall thy grave with rising flowers be drest,
And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
There shall the Morn her earliest tears bestow,
There the first roses of the year shall blow;
While angels with their silver wings o'ershade
The ground now sacred by thy relics made.
So, peaceful rests, without a stone, a name,
What once had beauty, titles, wealth, and fame.
How loved, how honoured once, avails thee not,
To whom related, or by whom begot;
A heap of dust alone remains of thee;
'Tis all thou art, and all the proud shall be!
Poets themselves must fall, like those they sung,
Deaf the praised ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.
Even he, whose soul now melts in mournful lays,
Shall shortly want the generous tear he pays;
Then from his closing eyes thy form shall part,
And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart,
Life's idle business at one gasp be o'er,
The Muse forgot, and thou beloved no more!

Alexander Pope.

CLXIV

ON THE DEATH OF MR. ROBERT LEVET,

A PRACTISER IN PHYSIC.

Condemned to Hope's delusive mine,
As on we toil from day to day,
By sudden blasts, or slow decline,
Our social comforts drop away.

Well tried through many a varying year,
See Levet to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

Yet still he fills affection's eye,
Obscurely wise, and coarsely kind;
Nor, lettered Arrogance, deny
Thy praise to merit unrefined.

When fainting nature called for aid,
And hovering death prepared the blow,
His vigorous remedy displayed
The power of art without the show.

In Misery's darkest cavern known,
His useful care was ever nigh,
Where hopeless Anguish poured his groan,
And lonely Want retired to die.

No summons mocked by chill delay,
No petty gain disdained by pride,
The modest wants of every day
The toil of every day supplied.

His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the Eternal Master found
The single talent well employed.

The busy day—the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

Then with no fiery throbbing pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way.

Samuel Johnson.

CLXV

HIGHLAND MARY.

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;

But, oh! fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

Robert Burns

CLXVI

THE CAST-AWAY.

Obscurest night involved the sky;
The Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast,
Than he, with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay:
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted; nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow.
But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld:
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repelled:
And ever as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried—'Adieu!'

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
Could catch the sound no more.
For then by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him; but the page
Of narrative sincere,

That tells his name, his worth, his age,
  Is wet with Anson's tear.
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
  Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
  A more enduring date;
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
  No light propitious shone,
When snatched from all effectual aid
  We perished, each alone:
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

William Cowper.

CLXVII

THE LAND O' THE LEAL.

I'm wearing awa', John,
Like snaw when its thaw, John,
I'm wearing awa'
  To the land o' the leal.
There's nae sorrow there, John,
There's neither cauld nor care, John,
The day is aye fair
  In the land o' the leal.

Ye were aye leal and true, John,
Your task's ended noo, John,
And I'll welcome you
  To the land o' the leal.

Our bonnie bairn's there, John,
She was baith guid and fair, John;
Oh we grudged her right sair
To the land o' the leal!

Then dry that tearfu' e'e, John,
My soul langs to be free, John,
And angels wait on me
To the land o' the leal.
Now fare ye weel, my ain John,
This warld's care is vain, John;
We'll meet and aye be fain
In the land o' the leal.

Lady Nairn.

CLXVIII

ELEGY, WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herds wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their names, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonoured dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tales relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

'One morn, I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came, nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

'The next with dirges due in sad array,
Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne:
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth, to Fortune and to Fame unknown:
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery all he had, a tear;
He gained from Heaven, 'twas all he wished, a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose;)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

Thomas Gray.

CLXIX

WRESTLING JACOB.

Come, O Thou traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see,
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee;
With Thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

I need not tell Thee who I am,
My misery or sin declare;

Thyself hast called me by my name;
Look on thy hands, and read it there!
But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou?
Tell me thy Name, and tell me now.

In vain Thou strugglest to get free,
I never will unloose my hold;
Art Thou the Man that died for me?
The secret of thy love untold.
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,
Till I thy Name, thy nature know.

Wilt Thou not yet to me reveal
Thy new, unutterable Name?
Tell me, I still beseech Thee, tell:
To know it now, resolved I am:
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,
Till I thy Name, thy nature know.

'Tis all in vain to hold thy tongue,
Or touch the hollow of my thigh;
Though every sinew be unstrung,
Out of my arms Thou shalt not fly:
Wrestling, I will not let Thee go,
Till I thy Name, thy nature know.

What though my shrinking flesh complain,
And murmur to contend so long?
I rise superior to my pain;
When I am weak, then am I strong:
And when my all of strength shall fail,
I shall with the God-Man prevail.

My strength is gone; my nature dies;
I sink beneath thy weighty hand;
Faint to revive, and fall to rise;
I fall, and yet by faith I stand:
I stand, and will not let Thee go,
Till I thy Name, thy nature know.

Yield to me now, for I am weak,
But confident in self-despair;
Speak to my heart, in blessings speak,
Be conquered by my instant prayer!
Speak, or Thou never hence shall move,
And tell me, if thy Name be Love?

'Tis Love! 'tis Love! Thou diedst for me!
I hear thy whisper in my heart!
The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
Pure universal Love Thou art!
To me, to all, thy bowels move;
Thy nature and thy Name is Love!

My prayer hath power with God; the grace
Unspeakable I now receive;
Through faith I see Thee face to face,
I see Thee face to face, and live:
In vain I have not wept and strove;
Thy nature and thy Name is Love.

I know Thee, Saviour, who Thou art;
Jesus, the feeble sinner's Friend!
Nor wilt Thou with the night depart,
But stay, and love me to the end!
Thy mercies never shall remove,
Thy nature and thy Name is Love!

The Sun of Righteousness on me
Hath rose, with healing in his wings;
Withered my nature's strength, from Thee
My soul its life and succour brings;
My help is all laid up above;
Thy nature and thy Name is Love.

Contented now upon my thigh
I halt, till life's short journey end;

All helplessness, all weakness, I
  On Thee alone for strength depend;
Nor have I power from Thee to move;
Thy nature and thy Name is Love.

Lame as I am, I take the prey,
  Hell, earth, and sin, with ease o'ercome;
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
  And, as a bounding hart, fly home;
Through all eternity to prove,
Thy nature and thy Name is Love!

Charles Wesley.

PART THE FOURTH.

CLXX

TO THE CUCKOO.

O blithe new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass,
Thy twofold shout I hear;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessèd bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, fairy place
That is fit home for thee!

William Wordsworth.

CLXXI

THE RAINBOW.

Triumphal arch that fill'st the sky,
When storms prepare to part,
I ask not proud Philosophy
To teach me what thou art.

Still seem, as to my childhood's sight,
A mid-way station given
For happy spirits to alight,
Betwixt the earth and heaven.

Can all that optics teach, unfold
Thy form to please me so,
As when I dreamed of gems and gold
Hid in thy radiant bow?

When Science from Creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold material laws!

And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,
But words of the Most High,
Have told why first thy robe of beams
Was woven in the sky.

When o'er the green undeluged earth,
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's gray fathers forth
To watch thy sacred sign!

And when its yellow lustre smiled
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
To bless the bow of God.

Methinks, thy jubilee to keep,
The first-made anthem rang
On earth, delivered from the deep,
And the first poet sang.

Nor ever shall the Muse's eye,
Unraptured, greet thy beam;
Theme of primeval prophecy,
Be still the poet's theme!

The earth to thee her incense yields,
The lark thy welcome sings,
When, glittering in the freshened fields,
The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle cast
O'er mountain, tower, and town,
Or mirrored in the ocean vast,
A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam.

For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age,
That first spoke peace to man.

Thomas Campbell.

CLXXII

THE COMMON LOT.

Once, in the flight of ages past,
There lived a man:—and WHO was HE?—
Mortal! howe'er thy lot be cast,
That Man resembled thee.

Unknown the region of his birth,
The land in which he died unknown:
His name has perished from the earth;
This truth survives alone:—

That joy and grief, and hope and fear,
Alternate triumphed in his breast;
His bliss and woe,—a smile, a tear!—
Oblivion hides the rest.

The bounding pulse, the languid limb,
The changing spirits' rise and fall,
We know that these were felt by him,
For these are felt by all.

He suffered,—but his pangs are o'er;
Enjoyed,—but his delights are fled;
Had friends,—his friends are now no more;
And foes,—his foes are dead.

He loved,—but whom he loved, the grave
Hath lost in its unconscious womb:
Oh she was fair!—but nought could save
Her beauty from the tomb.

He saw whatever thou hast seen;
Encountered all that troubles thee:
He was—whatever thou hast been;
He is—what thou shalt be.

The rolling seasons, day and night,
Sun, moon, and stars, the earth and main,
Erewhile his portion, life, and light,
To him exist in vain.

The clouds and sunbeams, o'er his eye
That once their shades and glory threw,
Have left in yonder silent sky
No vestige where they flew.

The annals of the human race,
Their ruins since the world began,
Of HIM afford no other trace
Than this,—THERE LIVED A MAN!

James Montgomery.

CLXXIII

THE HOLLY TREE.

O Reader! hast thou ever stood to see
The Holly Tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Ordered by an Intelligence so wise,
As might confound the atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound;
But, as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize;
And in this wisdom of the Holly Tree
Can emblems see,
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
One which may profit in the after-time.

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere;
To those who on my leisure would intrude,
Reserved and rude;—
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The Holly leaves a sober hue display
Less bright than they;
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly Tree?

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng;
So would I seem amid the young and gay
More grave than they;
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly Tree.

Robert Southey.

CLXXIV

THE SQUIRE'S PEW.

A slanting ray of evening light
Shoots through the yellow pane:
It makes the faded crimson bright,
And gilds the fringe again;
The window's gothic framework falls
In oblique shadows on the walls.

And since those trappings first were new,
How many a cloudless day,
To rob the velvet of its hue,
Has come and passed away!
How many a setting sun hath made
That curious lattice-work of shade!

Crumbled beneath the hillock green
The cunning hand must be,
That carved this fretted door, I ween,
Acorn and fleur-de-lis;
And now the worm hath done her part
In mimicking the chisel's art.

In days of yore (as now we call)
When the First James was king,
The courtly knight from yonder Hall
His train did hither bring,
All seated round in order due,
With broidered suit and buckled shoe.

On damask cushions decked with fringe,
All reverently they knelt;
Prayer-books, with brazen hasp and hinge,
In ancient English spelt,
Each holding in a lily hand,
Responsive to the priest's command.

Now, streaming down the vaulted aisle,
The sunbeam, long and lone,
Illumes the characters awhile
Of their inscription-stone:
And there, in marble hard and cold,
The knight with all his train behold.

Outstretched together are exprest
He and my lady fair,

With hands uplifted on the breast,
In attitude of prayer:
Long-visaged, clad in armour, he—
With ruffled arm and bodice she.

Set forth in order as they died,
Their numerous offspring bend,
Devoutly kneeling side by side,
As if they did intend
For past omissions to atone
By saying endless prayers in stone.

Those mellow days are past and dim,
But generations new
In regular descent from him
Have filled the stately pew,
And in the same succession go
To occupy the vaults below.

And now the polished modern Squire
And his gay train appear,
Who duly to the Hall retire
A season every year,
And fill the seats with belle and beau,
As 'twas so many years ago;

Perchance, all thoughtless, as they tread
The hollow-sounding floor,
Of that dark house of kindred dead,
Which shall, as heretofore,
In turn receive to silent rest
Another and another guest:

The feathered hearse and sable train,
In all their wonted state,
Shall wind along the village lane,
And stand before the gate,
Brought many a distant county through,
To join the final rendezvous.

And when the race is swept away,
All to their dusty beds,
Still shall the mellow evening ray
Shine gaily o'er their heads;
While other faces, fresh and new,
Shall fill the Squire's deserted pew.

Jane Taylor.

CLXXV

A DREAM.

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my angel-guarded bed,
That an emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, 'wildered, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke, I heard her say:

'Oh, my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me.'

Pitying, I dropped a tear:
But I saw a glowworm near,
Who replied, 'What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?

'I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round.
Follow now the beetle's hum,
Little wanderer, hie thee home!'

William Blake.

CLXXVI

DECEMBER MORNING.

I love to rise ere gleams the tardy light,
Winter's pale dawn; and as warm fires illume,
And cheerful tapers shine around the room,
Through misty windows bend my musing sight,
Where, round the dusky lawn, the mansions white
With shutters closed peer faintly through the gloom,
That slow recedes; while yon grey spires assume,
Rising from their dark pile, an added height
By indistinctness given—Then to decree
The grateful thoughts to God, ere they unfold
To friendship or the Muse, or seek with glee
Wisdom's rich page. O hours more worth than gold,
By whose blest use we lengthen life, and, free
From drear decays of age, outlive the old!

Anna Seward.

CLXXVII

THE THRUSH'S NEST.

Within a thick and spreading hawthorn bush,
That overhung a molehill large and round,
I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
Sing hymns of rapture, while I drank the sound
With joy—and oft, an unintruding guest,
I watched her secret toils from day to day;
How true she warped the moss to form her nest,
And modelled it within with wood and clay.
And by and by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,
There lay her shining eggs as bright as flowers,
Ink-spotted over, shells of green and blue:
And there I witnessed in the summer hours
A brood of nature's minstrels chirp and fly,
Glad as the sunshine and the laughing sky.

John Clare.

CLXXVIII

TIME.

O Time! who know'st a lenient hand to lay
Softest on sorrow's wound, and slowly thence,
Lulling to sad repose the weary sense,
The faint pang stealest unperceived away;
On thee I rest my only hope at last,
And think, when thou hast dried the bitter tear
That flows in vain o'er all my soul held dear,
I may look back on every sorrow past
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile;
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,
Sings in the sunbeam, of the transient shower
Forgetful, though its wings are wet the while;
Yet ah! how much must that poor heart endure,
Which hopes from thee, and thee alone, a cure.

William Lisle Bowles.

CLXXIX

FANCY IN NUBIBUS.

Oh, it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily-persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or, with head bent low,
And cheek aslant, see rivers flow of gold,
'Twixt crimson banks; and then a traveller go
From mount to mount, through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or, listening to the tide with closèd sight,
Be that blind Bard, who on the Chian strand,
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

CLXXX

EVENING.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worshipp'st at the temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

William Wordsworth.

CLXXXI

THE WALL-FLOWER.

I will not praise the often-flattered rose,
Or, virgin-like, with blushing charms half seen,
Or when, in dazzling splendour, like a queen,
All her magnificence of state she shows;
No, nor that nun-like lily which but blows
Beneath the valley's cool and shady screen;
Nor yet the sun-flower, that with warrior mien
Still eyes the orb of glory where it glows;
But thou, neglected Wall-flower! to my breast
And Muse art dearest, wildest, sweetest flower!
To whom alone the privilege is given
Proudly to root thyself above the rest;
As Genius does, and from thy rocky tower
Lend fragrance to the purest breath of heaven.

Thomas Doubleday.

CLXXXII

THE SEA-CAVE.

Hardly we breathe, although the air be free:
How massively doth awful Nature pile
The living rock, like some cathedral aisle,
Sacred to Silence and the solemn Sea.
How that clear pool lies sleeping tranquilly,
And under its glassed waters seems to smile,
With many hues, a mimic grove the while
Of foliage submarine, shrub, flower, and tree.
Beautiful scene! and fitted to allure
The printless footsteps of some sea-born maid,
Who here, with her green tresses disarrayed,
'Mid the clear bath, unfearing and secure,
May sport at noontide in the caverned shade—
Cold as the shadow—as the waters pure.

Thomas Doubleday.

CLXXXIII

HOLY THURSDAY.

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
The children walking two and two, in red, and blue, and green;
Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's, they like Thames' waters flow.

O what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town,
Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all their own:
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls, raising their innocent hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among:
Beneath them sit the agèd men, wise guardians of the poor.
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

William Blake.

CLXXXIV

ON AN ANTIQUE GEM BEARING THE HEADS OF PERICLES AND ASPASIA.

This was the ruler of the land,
When Athens was the land of fame;
This was the light that led the band,
When each was like a living flame;
The centre of earth's noblest ring—
Of more than men the more than king!

Yet not by fetter, nor by spear,
His sovereignty was held or won:
Feared—but alone as freemen fear,
Loved—but as freemen love alone,
He waved the sceptre o'er his kind
By nature's first great title—mind!

Resistless words were on his tongue—
Then eloquence first flashed below;
Full armed to life the portent sprung—
Minerva from the Thunderer's brow!
And his the sole, the sacred hand
That shook her ægis o'er the land.

And throned immortal by his side,
A woman sits with eye sublime,—
Aspasia, all his spirit's bride;
But, if their solemn love were crime,
Pity the Beauty and the Sage—
Their crime was in their darkened age.

He perished, but his wreath was won—
  He perished in his height of fame;
Then sunk the cloud on Athens' sun,
  Yet still she conquered in his name.
Filled with his soul, she could not die;
Her conquest was posterity

George Croly.

CLXXXV

LOVE.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
  And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
  Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
  My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the armèd man,
The statue of the armèd knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
  Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
  The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
  That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face.

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees,
And how she tended him in vain;
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

CLXXXVI

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace,
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

Lord Byron.

CLXXXVII

SONG.

Oh welcome, bat and owlet gray,
Thus winging low your airy way!
And welcome, moth and drowsy fly,
That to mine ear come humming by!
And welcome, shadows dim and deep,
And stars that through the pale sky peep!
O welcome all! to me ye say,
My woodland Love is on her way.

Upon the soft wind floats her hair;
Her breath is in the dewy air;
Her steps are in the whispered sound,
That steals along the stilly ground.
O dawn of day, in rosy bower,
What art thou to this witching hour?
O noon of day, in sunshine bright,
What art thou to the fall of night?

Joanna Baillie.

CLXXXVIII

THE LONELY.

She was a queen of noble Nature's crowning,
A smile of her's was like an act of grace;
She had no winsome looks, no pretty frowning,
Like daily beauties of the vulgar race;
But if she smiled, a light was on her face,
A clear, cool kindliness, a lunar beam
Of peaceful radiance, silvering o'er the stream
Of human thought with unabiding glory;
Not quite a waking truth, not quite a dream,
A visitation, bright and transitory.

But she is changed,—hath felt the touch of sorrow;
No love hath she, no understanding friend;
Oh grief! when heaven is forced of earth to borrow
What the poor niggard earth has not to lend;
But when the stalk is snapt, the rose must bend.
The tallest flower that skyward rears its head,
Grows from the common ground, and there must shed
Its delicate petals. Cruel fate, too surely,
That they should find so base a bridal bed,
Who lived in virgin pride, so sweet and purely!

She had a brother, and a tender father;
And she was loved, but not as others are,
From whom we ask return of love,—but rather
As one might love a dream; a phantom-fair
Of something exquisitely strange and rare,
Which all were glad to look on, men and maids,
Yet no one claimed—as oft, in dewy glades
The peering primrose, like a sudden gladness,
Gleams on the soul, yet unregarded fades;—
The joy is ours, but all its own the sadness.

'Tis vain to say—her worst of grief is only
The common lot, which all the world have known;
To her 'tis more, because her heart is lonely,
And yet she hath no strength to stand alone;—
Once she had playmates, fancies of her own,
And she did love them. They are past away,
As fairies vanish at the break of day;
And like a spectre of an age departed,
Or unsphered angel wofully astray,
She glides along—the solitary-hearted.

Hartley Coleridge.

CLXXXIX

PROUD MAISIE.

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?'
—'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?'
—'The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

'The glowworm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady;
The owl from the steeple sing,
Welcome, proud lady.'

Sir Walter Scott.

CXC

AN HOUR WITH THEE.

An hour with thee!—When earliest day
Dapples with gold the eastern gray,
Oh, what can frame my mind to bear
The toil and turmoil, cark and care,
New griefs, which coming hours unfold,
And sad remembrance of the old?—
One hour with thee.

One hour with thee!—When burning June
Waves his red flag at pitch of noon;
What shall repay the faithful swain
His labour on the sultry plain;

And more than cave or sheltering bough,
Cool feverish blood, and throbbing brow?—
One hour with thee.

One hour with thee!—When sun is set,
Oh, what can teach me to forget
The thankless labours of the day,
The hopes, the wishes, flung away,
The increasing wants, and lessening gains,
The master's pride, who scorns my pains?—
One hour with thee.

Sir Walter Scott.

CXCI

THE FUGITIVES.

The waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing—
Away!
The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing—
Come away!
The earth is like ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion:
Bird, beast, man, and worm,
Have crept out of the storm—
Come away!

'Our boat has one sail,
And the helmsman is pale;—
A bold pilot I trow,
Who should follow us now,'
Shouted He—

And She cried: 'Ply the oar,
Put off gaily from shore!'
As she spoke bolts of death,
Mixed with hail, specked their path
O'er the sea.
And from isle, tower, and rock,
The blue beacon-cloud broke,
Though dumb in the blast,
The red cannon flashed fast
From the lee.

'And fear'st thou, and fear'st thou?
And see'st thou, and hear'st thou?
And drive we not free
O'er the terrible sea,
I and thou?'
One boat-cloak did cover
The loved and the lover—
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure
Soft and low;—
While around the lashed ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shattered, and shifted,
To and fro.

In the court of the fortress,
Beside the pale portress,
Like a bloodhound well beaten
The bridegroom stands, eaten
By shame:
On the topmost watch turret,
As a death-boding spirit,
Stands the gray tyrant father,
To his voice the mad weather
Seems tame;

And with curses as wild
As e'er clung to child,
He devotes to the blast
The best, loveliest, and last,
Of his name!

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CXCII

LUCY.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh!
The difference to me!

William Wordsworth.

CXCIII

ODE TO PSYCHE.

O Goddess, hear these tuneless numbers, wrung
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung,
Even into thine own soft-conchèd ear:
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see
The wingèd Psyche with awakened eyes?
I wandered in a forest thoughtlessly,
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,

Saw two fair creatures, couchèd side by side
In deepest grass, beneath the whispering roof
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran
A brooklet, scarce espied:
'Mid hushed, cool-rooted flowers fragrant-eyed,
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass;
Their arms embracèd, and their pinions too;
Their lips touched not, but had not bade adieu,
As if disjoinèd by soft-handed slumber,
And ready still past kisses to outnumber
At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love:
The wingèd Boy I knew;
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?
His Psyche true!

O latest-born and loveliest vision far
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-regioned star!
Or Vesper, amorous glowworm of the sky;
Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,
Nor altar heaped with flowers;
Nor Virgin-choir to make delicious moan
Upon the midnight hours;
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
From chain-swung censer teeming;
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.
O brightest! though too late for antique vows,
Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,
When holy were the haunted forest boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire;
Yet even in these days so far retired
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.

So let me be thy choir, and make a moan
Upon the midnight hours;
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
From swingèd censer teeming:
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
Of pale-mouthed prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branchèd thoughts, new-grown with pleasant pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
Far, far around shall those dark-clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridgèd mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lulled to sleep;
And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress
With the wreathed trellis of a working brain,
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same:
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in!

John Keats.

CXCIV

THE SUNFLOWER.

Ah Sunflower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the traveller's journey is done;
Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
Where my Sunflower wishes to go.

William Blake.

CXCV

REGRETS.

Too true it is, my time of power was spent
In idly watering weeds of casual growth,
That wasted energy to desperate sloth
Declined, and fond self-seeking discontent;
That the huge debt for all that Nature lent
I sought to cancel, and was nothing loth
To deem myself an outlaw, severed both
From duty and from hope,—yea, blindly sent
Without an errand, where I would to stray:—
Too true it is, that, knowing now my state,
I weakly mourn the sin I ought to hate,
Nor love the law I yet would fain obey:
But true it is, above all law and fate
Is Faith, abiding the appointed day.

Hartley Coleridge.

CXCVI

TO A LOFTY BEAUTY, FROM HER POOR KINSMAN.

Fair maid, had I not heard thy baby cries,
Nor seen thy girlish, sweet vicissitude,
Thy mazy motions, striving to elude,
Yet wooing still a parent's watchful eyes,
Thy humours, many as the opal's dyes,
And lovely all;—methinks thy scornful mood,
And bearing high of stately womanhood,—
Thy brow, where Beauty sits to tyrannize
O'er humble love, had made me sadly fear thee;
For never sure was seen a royal bride,
Whose gentleness gave grace to so much pride—
My very thoughts would tremble to be near thee:
But when I see thee at thy father's side,
Old times unqueen thee, and old loves endear thee.

Hartley Coleridge.

CXCVII

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET.

Green little vaulter on the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When ev'n the bees lag at the summoning brass;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;
O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts, and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song,
In doors and out, summer and winter, mirth.

Leigh Hunt.

CXCVIII

TO A BIRD THAT HAUNTED THE WATERS OF LAKEN IN THE WINTER.

O melancholy bird!—a winter's day
Thou standest by the margin of the pool,
And, taught by God, dost thy whole being school
To patience, which all evil can allay;
God has appointed thee the fish thy prey;
And given thyself a lesson to the fool
Unthrifty, to submit to moral rule,
And his unthinking course by thee to weigh.
There need not schools, nor the professor's chair,
Though these be good, true wisdom to impart;
He, who has not enough for these to spare
Of time or gold, may yet amend his heart,
And teach his soul by brooks and rivers fair;
Nature is always wise in every part.

Lord Thurlow.

CXCIX

THE SYLVAN LIFE.

When in the woods I wander all alone,
The woods that are my solace and delight,
Which I more covet than a prince's throne,
My toil by day and canopy by night;
(Light heart, light foot, light food, and slumber light,
These lights shall light me to old age's gate,
While monarchs, whom rebellious dreams affright,
Heavy with fear, death's fearful summons wait;)
Whilst here I wander, pleased to be alone,
Weighing in thought the world's no-happiness,
I cannot choose but wonder at its moan,
Since so plain joys the woody life can bless:
Then live who may where honied words prevail,
I with the deer, and with the nightingale!

Lord Thurlow.

CC

SPRING.

Again the violet of our early days
Drinks beauteous azure from the golden sun,
And kindles into fragrance at his blaze;
The streams, rejoiced that winter's work is done,
Talk of to-morrow's cowslips, as they run.
Wild apple! thou art bursting into bloom;
Thy leaves are coming, snowy-blossomed thorn!
Wake, buried lily! spirit, quit thy tomb;
And thou, shade-loving hyacinth, be born.
Then haste, sweet rose! sweet woodbine, hymn the morn,
Whose dew-drops shall illume with pearly light
Each grassy blade that thick embattled stands
From sea to sea, while daisies infinite
Uplift in praise their little glowing hands
O'er every hill that under heaven expands.

Ebenezer Elliot.

CCI

THE POETRY OF EARTH.

The poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

John Keats.

CCII

SONNET.

Lady, I bid thee to a sunny dome,
Ringing with echoes of Italian song:
Henceforth to thee these magic halls belong,
And all the pleasant place is like a home.
Hark, on the right with full piano tone
Old Dante's voice encircles all the air:
Hark yet again, like flute-tones mingling rare,
Comes the keen sweetness of Petrarca's moan.
Pass thou the lintel freely; without fear
Feast on the music. I do better know thee,
Than to suspect this pleasure thou dost owe me
Will wrong thy gentle spirit, or make less dear
That element whence thou must draw thy life—
An English maiden, and an English wife.

Arthur Henry Hallam.

CCIII

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown:

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf,

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown:

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Lord Byron.

CCIV

THRASYMENE.

Is this the spot where Rome's eternal foe
Into his snares the mighty legions drew,
Whence from the carnage, spiritless and few,
A remnant scarcely reached her gates of woe?
Is this the stream, thus gliding soft and slow,
That, from the gushing wounds of thousands, grew
So fierce a flood, that waves of crimson hue
Rushed on the bosom of the lake below?
The mountains that gave back the battle-cry
Are silent now;—perchance yon hillocks green
Mark where the bones of those old warriors lie!
Heaven never gladdened a more peaceful scene;
Never left softer breeze a fairer sky
To sport upon thy waters, Thrasymene.

Charles Strong.

CCV

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY.

BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERJEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT.

Oh! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast,
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark!—What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God, 'tis he, boys.
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar:
And he—he turns, he flies:—shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war.

Ho! comrades, scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the Mitre and the Crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford Halls; there is wail in Durham's Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom: the Bishop rends his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

Lord Macaulay.

CCVI

CAVALIER SONG.

While the dawn on the mountain was misty and gray,
My true love has mounted his steed and away,
Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and o'er down;
Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the Crown!

He has doffed the silk doublet the breast-plate to bear,
He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long-flowing hair,
From his belt to his stirrup his broadsword hangs down,—
Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the Crown!

For the rights of fair England that broadsword he draws,
Her King is his leader, her Church is his cause;
His watchword is honour, his pay is renown,—
God strike with the Gallant that strikes for the Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
The roundheaded rebels of Westminster Hall;
But tell these bold traitors of London's proud town,
That the spears of the North have encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
There's Erin's high Ormond and Scotland's Montrose!
Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey, and Brown,
With the Barons of England, that fight for the Crown?

Now joy to the crest of the brave Cavalier!
Be his banner unconquered, resistless his spear,
Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown
In a pledge to Fair England, her Church, and her Crown.

Sir Walter Scott.

CCVII

THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat
Lay their bulwarks on the brine,
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime;
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
'Hearts of oak!' our captains cried; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail,
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave:
'Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:
So peace instead of death let us bring;
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King.'

Then Denmark blessed our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day;
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, Old England, raise
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,
With the gallant good Riou:
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

Thomas Campbell.

CCVIII

HOHENLINDEN.

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills, with thunder riven;
Then rushed the steed, to battle driven;
And louder than the bolts of Heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn; but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich, all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part, where many meet;
The snow shall be their winding-sheet;
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

Thomas Campbell.

CCIX

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay,—
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great has passed away.

William Wordsworth.

CCX

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

Fair Star of Evening, Splendour of the West,
Star of my country!—on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest,
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and should'st wink,
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there it lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory! I with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

William Wordsworth.

CCXI

NOVEMBER, 1806.

Another year!—another deadly blow!
Another mighty empire overthrown!
And we are left, or shall be left, alone;
The last that dare to struggle with the foe.
'Tis well! from this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

William Wordsworth.

CCXII

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast.
Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we stedfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head.
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,—
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone with his glory.

Charles Wolfe.

CCXIII

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
And armed with Kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing:
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,

Who strewed our earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fall'n so far.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bowed so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestioned,—power to save,—
Thine only gift hath been the grave,
To those that worshipped thee;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preached before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks, never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife—
The earthquake voice of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seemed made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quelled!—Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!
The Arbiter of others' fate
A suppliant for his own!

Is it some yet imperial hope,
That with such change can calmly cope?
  Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

He who of old would rend the oak,
  Dreamed not of the rebound:
Chained by the trunk he vainly broke—
  Alone—how looked he round?
Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,
An equal deed hast done at length,
  And darker fate hast found:
He fell, the forest prowlers' prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

The Roman, when his burning heart
  Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
  In savage grandeur, home—
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
  Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandoned power.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
  Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
  An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
  His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
  The thunderbolt is wrung—

Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart,
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean!

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bowed the trembling limb,
And thanked him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain:
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

Weighed in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay:
Thy scales, Mortality, are just
To all that pass away:
But yet methought the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay:
Nor deemed Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride,
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem;
'Tis worth thy vanished diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile—
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all-idle hand,
In loitering mood upon the sand,
That Earth is now as free,
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferred his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage—
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prisoned rage?
But one—'The world *was* mine!'
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit poured so widely forth—
So long obeyed—so little worth!

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!
Foredoomed by God—by man accurst,

And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch-mock;
He in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

Lord Byron.

CCXIV

SONG.

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PITT CLUB OF SCOTLAND, 1814.

O dread was the time, and more dreadful the omen,
When the brave on Marengo lay slaughtered in vain,
And beholding broad Europe bowed down by her foemen,
Pitt closed in his anguish the map of her reign!
Not the fate of broad Europe could bend his brave spirit
To take for his country the safety of shame;
O then in her triumph remember his merit,
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Round the husbandman's head, while he traces the furrow,
The mists of the winter may mingle with rain,
He may plough it with labour, and sow it in sorrow,
And sigh while he fears he has sowed it in vain;
He may die ere his children shall reap in their gladness,
But the blithe harvest-home shall remember his claim;
And their jubilee-shout shall be softened with sadness,
While they hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Though anxious and timeless his life was expended,
In foils for our Country preserved by his care,
Though he died ere one ray o'er the nations ascended,
To light the long darkness of doubt and despair;
The storms he endured in our Britain's December,
The perils his wisdom foresaw and o'ercame,
For her glory's rich harvest shall Britain remember
And hallow the goblet that flows to his name.

Nor forget this gray head, who, all dark in affliction,
  Is deaf to the tale of our victories won,
And to sounds the most dear to paternal affection,
  The shout of his people applauding his son;
By his firmness unmoved in success or disaster,
  By his long reign of virtue, remember his claim!
With our tribute to Pitt join the praise of his Master,
  Though a tear stain the goblet that flows to his name.

Yet again fill the wine-cup, and change the sad measure,
  The rites of our grief and our gratitude paid,
To our Prince, to our Heroes, devote the bright treasure,
  The wisdom that planned, and the zeal that obeyed!
Fill Wellington's cup till it beam like his glory,
  Forget not our own brave Dalhousie and Græme,
A thousand years hence hearts shall bound at their story,
  And hallow the goblet that flows to their fame.

Sir Walter Scott.

CCXV

TO THE MEMORY OF PIETRO D'ALESSANDRO,

SECRETARY TO THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF SICILY IN 1848, WHO DIED AN EXILE AT MALTA IN JANUARY 1855.

Beside the covered grave
Linger the exiles, though their task is done.
Yes, brethren; from your band one more is gone,
A good man and a brave.

Scanty the rites, and train;
How many' of all the storied marbles, set
In all thy churches, City of La Valette,
Hide nobler heart and brain?

Ah! had his soul been cold,
Tempered to make a sycophant or spy,
To love hard truth less than an easy lie,
His country less than gold,—

Then, not the spirit's strife,
Nor sickening pangs at sight of conquering crime,
Nor anxious watching of an evil time,
Had worn his chords of life:

Nor here, nor thus with tears
Untimely shed, but there whence o'er the sea
The great Volcano looks, his rest might be,
The close of prosperous years.

No! Different hearts are bribed;
And therefore, in his cause's sad eclipse,
Here died he, with 'Palermo' on his lips,
A poor man, and proscribed.

Wrecked all thy hopes, O friend,—
Hopes for thyself, thine Italy, thine own,—
High gifts defeated of their due renown,—
Long toil—and this the end!

The end? not ours to scan:
Yet grieve not, children, for your father's worth;
Oh! never wish that in his native earth
He lay, a baser man.

What to the dead avail
The chance success, the blundering praise of fame?
Oh! rather trust, somewhere the noble aim
Is crowned, though here it fail.

Kind, generous, true wert thou:
This meed at least to goodness must belong,
That such it was. Farewell; the world's great wrong
Is righted for thee now.

Rest in thy foreign grave,
Sicilian! whom our English hearts have loved,—
Italian! such as Dante had approved,—
An exile—not a slave!

Henry Lushington.

CCXVI

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arvé and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air, and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.
  Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy,
Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there,
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!
  Awake my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks, and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.
  Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
Oh, struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,

Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink:
Companion of the morning star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, oh wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light;
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?
And you, ye five wild torrents, fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen and have rest?
Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing, ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!
Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!

Ye signs and wonders of the elements,
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!
Thou, too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene,
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou,
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me—rise, oh, ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

CCXVII

THE DANISH BOY.

Between two sister moorland rills
There is a spot that seems to lie
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
And sacred to the sky.
And in this smooth and open dell
There is a tempest-stricken tree;
A corner-stone by lightning cut,
The last stone of a lonely hut;
And in this dell you see
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
The shadow of a Danish boy.

In clouds above the lark is heard,
But drops not here to earth for rest;

Within this lonesome nook the bird,
Did never build her nest.
No beast, no bird hath here his home;
Bees, wafted on the breezy air,
Pass high above those fragrant bells
To other flowers; to other dells
Their burdens do they bear.
The Danish boy walks here alone:
The lovely dell is all his own.

A Spirit of noonday is he,
Yet seems a form of flesh and blood;
Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
Nor herd-boy of the wood.
A regal vest of fur he wears,
In colour like a raven's wing;
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew;
But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue
As budding pines in Spring;
His helmet has a vernal grace,
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

A harp is from his shoulder slung;
Resting the harp upon his knee,
To words of a forgotten tongue
He suits its melody.
Of flocks upon the neighbouring hills
He is the darling and the joy;
And often, when no cause appears,
The mountain ponies prick their ears,
—They hear the Danish boy,
While in the dell he sings alone
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

There sits he: in his face you spy
No trace of a ferocious air;
Nor ever was a cloudless sky
So steady or so fair.

The lovely Danish boy is blest,
And happy in his flowery cove:
From bloody deeds his thoughts are far;
And yet he warbles songs of war,
That seem like songs of love,
For calm and gentle is his mien;
Like a dead boy he is serene.

William Wordsworth.

CCXVIII

ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE.

Five years have passed; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain springs
With a soft inland murmur.—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
Which on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage ground, these orchard tufts,
Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees
With some uncertain notice, as might seem,
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms

Through a long absence have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessèd mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessèd mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood,
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever Nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by,)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite: a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense For I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In Nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me, here, upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! And this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts. that neither evil tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance,
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came,
Unwearied in that service; rather say
With warmer love, oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake.

William Wordsworth.

CCXIX

DEDICATION OF THE REVOLT OF ISLAM TO HIS WIFE.

So now my summer-task is ended, Mary,
And I return to thee, mine own heart's home;
As to his Queen some victor Knight of Faëry,
Earning bright spoils for her enchanted dome;
Nor thou disdain, that ere my fame become
A star among the stars of mortal night,
If it indeed may cleave its natal gloom,
Its doubtful promise thus I would unite
With thy belovèd name, thou Child of love and light.

The toil which stole from thee so many an hour,
Is ended,—and the fruit is at thy feet!
No longer where the woods to frame a bower
With interlacèd branches mix and meet,
Or where with sound like many voices sweet,
Water-falls leap among wild islands green,
Which framed for my lone boat a lone retreat
Of moss-grown trees and weeds, shall I be seen:
But beside thee, where still my heart has ever been.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear Friend, when first
The clouds which wrap this world from youth did pass.
I do remember well the hour which burst
My spirit's sleep: a fresh May-dawn it was,
When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,
And wept, I knew not why; until there rose
From the near school-room voices, that, alas!
Were but one echo from a world of woes—
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands and looked around—
But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,
Which poured their warm drops on the sunny ground—
So without shame I spake:—'I will be wise,

And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
Such power, for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannise
Without reproach or check.' I then controlled
My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek and bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest thought
Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore,
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
I cared to learn, but from that secret store
Wrought linkèd armour for my soul, before
It might walk forth to war among mankind;
Thus power and hope were strengthened more and more
Within me, till there came upon my mind
A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which I pined.

Alas, that love should be a blight and snare
To those who seek all sympathies in one!—
Such once I sought in vain; then black despair,
The shadow of a starless night, was thrown
Over the world in which I moved alone:—
Yet never found I one not false to me,
Hard hearts, and cold, like weights of icy stone,
Which crushed and withered mine, that could not be
Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived by thee.

Thou Friend, whose presence on my wintry heart
Fell, like bright spring upon some herbless plain,
How beautiful and calm and free thou wert
In thy young wisdom, when the mortal chain
Of Custom thou didst burst and rend in twain,
And walked as free as light the clouds among,
Which many an envious slave then breathed in vain
From his dim dungeon, and my spirit sprung
To meet thee from the woes which had begirt it long.

No more alone through the world's wilderness,
Although I trod the paths of high intent,

I journeyed now: no more companionless,
Where solitude is like despair, I went.—
There is the wisdom of a stern content,
When Poverty can blight the just and good,
When Infamy dares mock the innocent,
And cherished friends turn with the multitude
To trample: this was ours, and we unshaken stood!

Now has descended a serener hour,
And, with inconstant fortune, friends return;
Though suffering leaves the knowledge and the power
Which says:—Let scorn be not repaid with scorn;
And from thy side two gentle babes are born
To fill our home with smiles, and thus are we
Most fortunate beneath life's beaming morn;
And these delights, and thou, have been to me
The parents of the Song I consecrate to thee.

Is it, that now my inexperienced fingers
But strike the prelude of a loftier strain?
Or must the lyre on which my spirit lingers
Soon pause in silence, ne'er to sound again,
Though it might shake the Anarch Custom's reign,
And charm the minds of men to Truth's own sway,
Holier than was Amphion's? I would fain
Reply in hope—but I am worn away,
And Death and Love are yet contending for their prey.

And what art thou? I know, but dare not speak:
Time may interpret to his silent years.
Yet in the paleness of thy thoughtful cheek,
And in the light thine ample forehead wears,
And in thy sweetest smiles, and in thy tears,
And in thy gentle speech, a prophecy
Is whispered, to subdue my fondest fears:
And through thine eyes, even in thy soul I see
A lamp of vestal fire burning internally.

They say that thou wert lovely from thy birth,
Of glorious parents, thou aspiring Child:
I wonder not—for one then left this earth,
Whose life was like a setting planet mild,
Which clothed thee in the radiance undefiled
Of its departing glory; still her fame
Shines on thee through the tempests dark and wild,
Which shake these latter days; and thou canst claim
The shelter, from thy Sire, of an immortal name.

Truth's deathless voice pauses among mankind!
If there must be no response to my cry—
If men must rise and stamp with fury blind
On his pure name who loves them—thou and I,
Sweet Friend! can look from our tranquillity
Like lamps into the world's tempestuous night,—
Two tranquil stars, while clouds are passing by
Which wrap them from the foundering seaman's sight,
That burn from year to year with unextinguished light.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CCXX

FRANCE: AN ODE, 1797.

Ye clouds! that far above me float and pause,
  Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
  Ye ocean-waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye woods! that listen to the night-birds singing,
  Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging
  Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
    How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
    Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound!

O ye loud waves! and O ye forests high!
And O ye clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising sun! thou blue rejoicing sky!
Yea, every thing that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth, and sea,
Stamped her strong foot, and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared!
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The Monarchs marched in evil day
And Britain joined the dire array;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves
Had swoln the patriot emotion
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delayed and vain retreat!
For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

'And what,' I said, 'though Blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove?
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream?
Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The sun was rising, though ye hid his light!'
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and bright;

When France her front deep-scarred and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp;
While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic Treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;
Then I reproached my fears that would not flee;
'And soon,' I said, 'shall Wisdom teach her lore
In the low huts of them that toil and groan!
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till Love and Joy look round, and call the earth their own.'

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those dreams!
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams!
Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
With bleeding wounds; forgive me, that I cherished
One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes!
To scatter rage and traitorous guilt,
Where Peace her jealous home had built;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—
O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils,
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind?
To mix with kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey;
To' insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn? to tempt and to betray?

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain!
O Liberty! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the waves!
And there I felt thee!—on that sea-cliff's verge,
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea, and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

CCXXI

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air,)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:
Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver; hear, O hear!

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning; there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Mænad, ev'n from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height—
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: O hear!

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;

A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip the skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
O lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous One!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CCXXII

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,

But being too happy in thy happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the Fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?

John Keats.

CCXXIII

ODE TO A SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run,
Like an unbodied Joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glowworm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:

Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now!

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CCXXIV

'*ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR.*'

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
  Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
    A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
  The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
    But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
  Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
    Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
  Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
    Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
  Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
    And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
  Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
    Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
  The land of honourable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
    Away thy breath!

Seek out— less often sought than found—
  A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
    And take thy rest.

Lord Byron.

CCXXV

PESCHIERA.

What voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost?
'Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.'

The tricolor—a trampled rag
Lies, dirt and dust; the lines I track
By sentry boxes yellow-black,
Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand
Upon the grass of your redoubts;
The eagle with his black wings flouts
The breadth and beauty of your land.

Yet not in vain, although in vain,
O men of Brescia, on the day
Of loss past hope, I heard you say
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You said, 'Since so it is,—good bye
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe'er
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare
To tell, "The Lombard feared to die!"'

You said, (there shall be answer fit,)
'And if our children must obey,
They must; but thinking on this day,
'Twill less debase them to submit.'

You said, (oh, not in vain you said,)
'Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we may;
The hours ebb fast of this one day,
When blood may yet be nobly shed.'

Ah! not for idle hatred, not
For honour, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 'tis true,
By force and fortune's right he stands;
By fortune, which is in God's hands,
And strength, which yet shall spring in you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,
''Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all.'

Arthur Hugh Clough.

CCXXVI

LINES SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! It seemed no sleep,
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! then, if mine had been the painter's hand
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream,—

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou should'st have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years, a chronicle of heaven;
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have made;
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control:
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have been the friend,
If he had lived, of him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate work!—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
—Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time—
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here:—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

William Wordsworth.

CCXXVII

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN.

Thou still unravished bride of quietness!
  Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
  A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
  Of deities or mortals, or of both,
    In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
  What men or gods are these? What maidens loath?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
    What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
  Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
  Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
  Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;

Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearièd,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

John Keats.

CCXXVIII

STANZAS WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES.

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent light:
The breath of the moist air is light
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds, the birds, the ocean-floods,
The City's voice itself is soft like solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone;
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion—
How sweet, did any heart now share in my emotion!

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure;
Others I see whom these surround;
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,

Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;
They might lament—for I am one
Whom men love not, and yet regret;
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CCXXIX

DESPONDENCY REBUKED.

Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light;
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

CCXXX

THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS.

Oft in the stilly night
  Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
  Of other days around me:
    The smiles, the tears
    Of boyhood's years,
  The words of love then spoken;
    The eyes that shone,
    Now dimmed and gone,
  The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus in the stilly light
  Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
  Of other days around me.

When I remember all
  The friends so linked together
I've seen around me fall
  Like leaves in wintry weather,
    I feel like one
    Who treads alone
  Some banquet-hall deserted,
    Whose lights are fled,
    Whose garlands dead,
  And all but he departed!
Thus in the stilly night
  Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
  Of other days around me.

Thomas Moore.

CCXXXI

DIRGE.

If thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love, and all its smart—
Then sleep, dear, sleep!
And not a sorrow
Hang any tear on your eyelashes;
Lie still and deep,
Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow
In Eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love, and all its smart—
Then die, dear, die!
'Tis deeper, sweeter,
Than on a rose-bank to lie dreaming
With folded eye;
And then alone, amid the beaming
Of love's stars, thou'lt meet her
In Eastern sky.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

CCXXXII

LINES WRITTEN IN MY OWN ALBUM.

Fresh clad from heaven in robes of white,
A young probationer of light,
Thou wert, my soul, an album bright,

A spotless leaf; but thought, and care,
And friend and foe, in foul and fair,
Have 'written strange defeatures' there;

And Time with heaviest hand of all,
Like that fierce writing on the wall,
Hath stamped sad dates—he can't recall.

And error, gilding worst designs—
Like speckled snake that strays and shines—
Betrays his path by crooked lines;

And vice hath left his ugly blot;
And good resolves, a moment hot,
Fairly began—but finished not;

And fruitless, late remorse doth trace—
Like Hebrew lore a backward pace—
Her irrecoverable race.

Disjointed numbers; sense unknit;
Huge reams of folly; shreds of wit;
Compose the mingled mass of it.

My scalded eyes no longer brook
Upon this ink-blurred thing to look—
Go, shut the leaves, and clasp the book.

Charles Lamb.

CCXXXIII

SONNET.

October's gold is dim—the forests rot,
The weary rain falls ceaseless, while the day
Is wrapt in damp. In mire of village-way
The hedgerow leaves are stampt, and, all forgot,
The broodless nest sits visible in the thorn.
Autumn, among her drooping marigolds,
Weeps all her garnered fields and empty folds
And dripping orchards, plundered and forlorn.
The season is a dead one, and I die!
No more, no more for me the spring shall make
A resurrection in the earth, and take
The death from out her heart—O God, I die!
The cold throat-mist creeps nearer, till I breathe
Corruption. Drop, stark night, upon my death!

David Gray.

CCXXXIV.

SONNET.

Die down, O dismal day, and let me live;
And come, blue deeps, magnificently strewn
With coloured clouds—large, light, and fugitive—
By upper winds through pompous motions blown.
Now it is death in life—a vapour dense
Creeps round my window, till I cannot see
The far snow-shining mountains, and the glens
Shagging the mountain tops. O God! make free
This barren shackled earth, so deadly cold—
Breathe gently forth thy spring, till winter flies
In rude amazement, fearful and yet bold,
While she performs her customed charities.
I weigh the loaded hours till life is bare—
O God, for one clear day, a snowdrop, and sweet air!

David Gray.

CCXXXV

SONNET.

O Winter, wilt thou never, never, go?
O Summer, but I weary for thy coming,
Longing once more to hear the Luggie flow,
And frugal bees, laboriously humming.
Now the east wind diseases the infirm,
And I must crouch in corners from rough weather;
Sometimes a winter sunset is a charm—
When the fired clouds, compacted, blaze together,
And the large sun dips red behind the hills.
I, from my window, can behold this pleasure;
And the eternal moon, what time she fills
Her orb with argent, treading a soft measure,
With queenly motions of a bridal mood,
Through the white spaces of infinitude.

David Gray.

CCXXXVI

THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry, ''Weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!'
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,
'Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight;
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black:

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins, and set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing they run,
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his Father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work;
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm:
So, if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.

William Blake.

CCXXXVII

TO THE MOON.

Art thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless,
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CCXXXVIII

SONG.

If I had thought thou could'st have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou could'st mortal be.
It never through my mind had past
That time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou should'st smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again;
And still the thought I will not brook
That I must look in vain.
But when I speak thou dost not say,
What thou ne'er left'st unsaid;
And now I feel, as well I may,
Sweet Mary, thou art dead!

If thou would'st stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold, and all serene—
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been!

While e'en thy chill, bleak corse I have,
  Thou seemest still mine own;
But there—I lay thee in thy grave,
  And I am now alone!

I do not think, where'er thou art,
  Thou hast forgotten me;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart,
  In thinking still of thee:
Yet there was round thee such a dawn
  Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
  And never can restore!

Charles Wolfe.

CCXXXIX

ON ANOTHER'S SORROW.

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He, who smiles on all,
Hear the wren, with sorrows small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear?

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast?
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
Oh, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give his joy to all:
He becomes an infant small,
He becomes a man of woe,
He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
And thy Maker is not by:
Think not thou canst weep a tear,
And thy Maker is not near.

Oh! He gives to us his joy,
That our griefs He may destroy:
Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan.

William Blake.

CCXL

A DEAD ROSE.

O Rose, who dares to name thee?
No longer roseate now, nor soft, nor sweet,
But pale and hard and dry as stubble wheat,—
Kept seven years in a drawer, thy titles shame thee.

The breeze that used to blow thee
Between the hedgerow thorns, and take away
An odour up the lane to last all day,—
If breathing now, unsweetened would forgo thee.

The sun that used to smite thee,
And mix his glory in thy gorgeous urn,
Till beam appeared to bloom, and flower to burn,—
If shining now, with not a hue would light thee.

The dew that used to wet thee,
And, white first, grow incarnadined because
It lay upon thee where the crimson was,—
If dropping now, would darken where it met thee.

The fly that 'lit upon thee,
To stretch the tendrils of its tiny feet
Along thy leaf's pure edges after heat,—
If 'lighting now, would coldly overrun thee.

The bee that once did suck thee,
And build thy perfumed ambers up his hive,
And swoon in thee for joy, till scarce alive,—
If passing now, would blindly overlook thee.

The heart doth recognize thee,
Alone, alone! the heart doth smell thee sweet,
Doth view thee fair, doth judge thee most complete,
Perceiving all those changes that disguise thee.

Yes, and the heart doth owe thee
More love, dead rose, than to' any roses bold
Which Julia wears at dances smiling cold:—
Lie still upon this heart which breaks below thee!

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

CCXLI

AT THE CHURCH GATE.

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her.

The Minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
And noise and humming:
They've hushed the Minster bell:
The organ 'gins to swell:
She's coming, she's coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid, and stepping fast,
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast:
She comes—she's here—she's past—
May Heaven go with her!

Kneel, undisturbed, fair Saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits who wait
And see through Heaven's gate
Angels within it.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

CCXLII

ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN.

I saw where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work;
A floweret crushèd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,

Was in her cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying:
So soon to' exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show,
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say, that Nature blind
Checked her hand, and changed her mind
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finished pattern without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lacked she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sickened)
That should thy little limbs have quickened?
Limbs so firm, they seemed to' assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair, they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That babe or mother, one must die;
So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch; to save the shock
Of young years widowed, and the pain
When Single State comes back again
To the lone man who, reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimèd life?
The economy of Heaven is dark,
And wisest clerks have missed the mark
Why human buds, like this, should fall
More brief than fly ephemeral

That has his day; while shrivelled crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones;
And crabbèd use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
—Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss:
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells, and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips
Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infant's glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave,
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie—
A more harmless vanity?

Charles Lamb.

CCXLIII

ON THE SAME.

Child of a day, thou knowest not
The tears that overflow thine urn,
The gushing eyes that read thy lot;
Nor, if thou knewest, could'st return!
And why the wish! the pure and blest
Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep:
O peaceful night! O envied rest!
Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

Walter Savage Landor.

CCXLIV

FIRE.

Sweet Maiden, for so calm a life
Too bitter seemed thine end;
But thou hadst won thee, ere that strife,
A more than earthly Friend.

We miss thee in thy place at school,
And on thine homeward way,
Where violets by the reedy pool
Peep out so shyly gay:

Where thou, a true and gentle guide,
Wouldst lead thy little band,
With all an elder sister's pride,
And rule with eye and hand.

And if *we* miss, oh, who may speak
What thoughts are hovering round
The pallet where thy fresh young cheek
Its evening slumber found?

How many a tearful longing look
In silence seeks thee yet,
Where in its own familiar nook
Thy fireside chair is set?

And oft when little voices dim
Are feeling for the note
In chanted prayer, or psalm, or hymn,
And wavering wildly float,

Comes gushing o'er a sudden thought
Of her who led the strain,
How oft such music home she brought—
But ne'er shall bring again.

O say not so! the springtide air
Is fraught with whisperings sweet;
Who knows but heavenly carols there
With ours may duly meet?

Who knows how near, each holy hour,
The pure and child-like dead
May linger, where in shrine or bower
The mourner's prayer is said?

And He who willed thy tender frame
(O stern yet sweet decree!)
Should wear the martyr's robe of flame,
He hath prepared for thee

A garland in that region bright
Where infant spirits reign,
Tinged faintly with such golden light
As crowns his martyr train.

Nay doubt it not: his tokens sure
Were round her death-bed shown:
The wasting pain might not endure,
'Twas calm ere life had flown,

Even as we read of Saints of yore:
Her heart and voice were free
To crave one quiet slumber more
Upon her mother's knee.

John Keble.

CCXLV

ON BEING PRESSED TO GO TO A MASQUED BALL NOT MANY MONTHS AFTER THE DEATH OF MY CHILD.

Oh, lead me not in Pleasure's train,
With faltering step and faded brow;
She such a votary would disdain,
And such a homage disavow.

But art thou sure the goddess leads
Yon motley group that onward press?
Some gaudy phantom-shape precedes,
Arrayed in Pleasure's borrowed dress.

When last I saw *her* smile serene,
And spread her soft enchantments wide,
My lovely child adorned the scene,
And sported by the flowing tide.

The fairest shells for me to seek,
Intent the little wanderer strayed;
The rose that blossomed on his cheek
Still deepening as the breezes played.

Exulting in his form and face,
Through the bright veil that beauty wove,
How did my heart delight to trace
A soul—all harmony and love!

Fair as the dreams by fancy given,
A model of unearthly grace;
Whene'er he raised his eyes to heaven,
He seemed to seek his native place.

More lovely than the morning ray,
His brilliant form of life and light
Through strange gradations of decay
In sad succession shocked my sight.

And since that agonizing hour,
That sowed the seed of mourning years,
Beauty has lost its cheering power,
I see it through a mother's tears.

Soon was my dream of bliss o'ercast,
And all the dear illusion o'er;
A few dark days of terror past,
And joy and Frederick bloom no more.

Melesina Trench.

CCXLVI

THE DEATH BED.

We watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers,
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied;
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

Thomas Hood.

CCXLVII

LINES WRITTEN IN RICHMOND CHURCHYARD, YORKSHIRE.

Methinks it is good to be here;
If Thou wilt, let us build—but for whom?
Nor Elias nor Moses appear,
But the shadows of eve that encompass the gloom,
The abode of the dead and the place of the tomb.

Shall we build to Ambition? oh, no!
Affrighted, he shrinketh away;
For see! they would pin him below,

In a small narrow cave, and, begirt with cold clay,
To the meanest of reptiles a peer and a prey.

To Beauty? ah, no!—she forgets
The charms which she wielded before—
Nor knows the foul worm that he frets
The skin which but yesterday fools could adore,
For the smoothness it held, or the tint which it wore.

Shall we build to the purple of Pride—
The trappings which dizen the proud?
Alas! they are all laid aside;
And here's neither dress nor adornment allowed,
But the long winding-sheet and the fringe of the shroud.

To Riches? alas! 'tis in vain;
Who hid, in their turns have been hid:
The treasures are squandered again;
And here in the grave are all metals forbid,
But the tinsel that shone on the dark coffin-lid.

To the pleasures which Mirth can afford—
The revel, the laugh, and the jeer?
Ah! here is a plentiful board!
But the guests are all mute as their pitiful cheer,
And none but the worm is a reveller here.

Shall we build to Affection and Love?
Ah, no! they have withered and died,
Or fled with the spirit above;
Friends, brothers, and sisters, are laid side by side,
Yet none have saluted, and none have replied.

Unto Sorrow?—The dead cannot grieve;
Not a sob, not a sigh meets mine ear,
Which compassion itself could relieve!
Ah! sweetly they slumber, nor hope, love, nor fear—
Peace, peace is the watchword, the only one here!

Unto Death, to whom monarchs must bow?
Ah, no! for his empire is known,
And here there are trophies enow!
Beneath—the cold dead, and around—the dark stone,
Are the signs of a Sceptre that none may disown!

The first tabernacle to Hope we will build,
And look for the sleepers around us to rise;
The second to Faith, which ensures it fulfilled;
And the third to the Lamb of the great Sacrifice,
Who bequeathed us them both when He rose to the skies.

Herbert Knowles.

CCXLVIII

TIME.

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality!
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

CCXLIX

SHE IS FAR FROM THE LAND.

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And lovers are round her sighing;
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking;—
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the Minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him ;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his Love stay behind him.

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow ;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the West,
From her own loved island of sorrow.

Thomas Moore.

CCL

THE LAST MAN.

All worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
The sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
Its immortality!
I saw a vision in my sleep,
That gave my spirit strength to sweep
Adown the gulf of Time!
I saw the last of human mould,
That shall Creation's death behold,
As Adam saw her prime!

The sun's eye had a sickly glare,
The earth with age was wan,
The skeletons of nations were
Around that lonely man!
Some had expired in fight,—the brands
Still rusted in their bony hands ;
In plague and famine some!
Earth's cities had no sound nor tread ;
And ships were drifting with the dead
To shores where all was dumb!

Yet, prophet-like, that lone one stood,
With dauntless words and high,
That shook the sere leaves from the wood,
As if a storm passed by—
Saying, We' are twins in death, proud Sun,
Thy face is cold, thy race is run,
'Tis mercy bids thee go;
For thou ten thousand thousand years
Hast seen the tide of human tears,
That shall no longer flow.

What though beneath thee man put forth
His pomp, his pride, his skill;
And arts that made fire, flood, and earth,
The vassals of his will;—
Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,
Thou dim discrownèd king of day;
For all those trophied arts
And triumphs that beneath thee sprang,
Healed not a passion or a pang
Entailed on human hearts.

Go, let oblivion's curtain fall
Upon the stage of men,
Nor with thy rising beams recall
Life's tragedy again.
Its piteous pageants bring not back,
Nor waken flesh upon the rack
Of pain anew to writhe;
Stretched in disease's shapes abhorred,
Or mown in battle by the sword,
Like grass beneath the scythe.

Even I am weary in yon skies
To watch thy fading fire;
Test of all sumless agonies,
Behold not me expire.

My lips that speak thy dirge of death—
Their rounded gasp and gurgling breath
To see thou shalt not boast.
The eclipse of nature spreads my pall,—
The majesty of darkness shall
Receive my parting ghost!

This spirit shall return to Him
Who gave its heavenly spark;
Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim,
When thou thyself art dark!
No! it shall live again, and shine,
In bliss unknown to beams of thine,
By Him recalled to breath,
Who captive led captivity,
Who robbed the grave of victory,
And took the sting from death!

Go, Sun, while mercy holds me up
On nature's awful waste,
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste—
Go, tell the night that hides thy face,
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race,
On earth's sepulchral clod,
The darkening universe defy
To quench his immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!

Thomas Campbell.

CCLI

ROSE AYLMER.

Ah! what avails the sceptred race,
Ah! what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

Walter Savage Landor.

CCLII.

THE SPRING OF THE YEAR.

Gone were but the winter cold,
And gone were but the snow,
I could sleep in the wild woods
Where primroses blow.

Cold's the snow at my head,
And cold at my feet;
And the finger of death's at my een,
Closing them to sleep.

Let none tell my father,
Or my mother so dear,—
I'll meet them both in heaven
At the spring of the year.

Allan Cunningham.

CCLIII

BURIAL OF THE DEAD.

I thought to meet no more, so dreary seemed
Death's interposing veil, and thou so pure,
Thy place in Paradise
Beyond where I could soar;

Friend of this worthless heart! but happier thoughts
Spring like unbidden violets from the sod,
Where patiently thou tak'st
Thy sweet and sure repose.

The shadows fall more soothing, the soft air
Is full of cheering whispers like thine own;
While Memory, by thy grave,
Lives o'er thy funeral day;

The deep knell dying down; the mourners' pause,
Waiting their Saviour's welcome at the gate;
Sure with the words of Heaven
Thy spirit met us there,

And sought with us along the accustomed way
The hallowed porch, and entering in beheld
The pageant of sad joy,
So dear to Faith and Hope.

Oh, hadst thou brought a strain from Paradise
To cheer us, happy soul! thou hadst not touched
The sacred springs of grief
More tenderly and true,

Than those deep-warbled anthems, high and low,
Low as the grave, high as the eternal Throne,
Guiding through light and gloom
Our mourning fancies wild,

Till gently, like soft golden clouds at eve
Around the western twilight, all subside
Into a placid Faith,
That e'en with beaming eye

Counts thy sad honours, coffin, bier, and pall:
So many relics of a frail love lost,
So many tokens dear
Of endless love begun.

Listen! it is no dream: the Apostle's trump
Gives earnest of the Archangel's: calmly now,
Our hearts yet beating high
To that victorious lay,

Most like a warrior's, to the martial dirge
Of a true comrade, in the grave we trust
Our treasure for a while;
And if a tear steal down,
If human anguish o'er the shaded brow
Pass shuddering, when the handful of pure earth
Touches the coffin-lid;
If at our brother's name
Once and again the thought, 'For ever gone,'
Comes o'er us like a cloud; yet, gentle spright,
Thou turnest not away,
Thou know'st us calm at heart.

One look, and we have seen our last of thee,
Till we too sleep, and our long sleep be o'er:
O cleanse us, ere we view
That countenance pure again,

Thou, who canst change the heart and raise the dead!
As Thou art by to soothe our parting hour,
Be ready when we meet
With thy dear pardoning words.

John Keble.

CCLIV

THE SLEEP.

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward into souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is
For gift or grace surpassing this—
'He giveth his belovèd, sleep'?

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown to light the brows?—
He giveth his belovèd, sleep.

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake:
He giveth his belovèd, sleep.

'Sleep soft, beloved!' we sometimes say,
Who have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber, when
He giveth his belovèd, sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And giveth his belovèd, sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap:
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
He giveth his belovèd, sleep.

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man,
Confirmed in such a rest to keep;
But angels say, and through the word
I think their happy smile is heard,—
'He giveth his belovèd, sleep.'

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,

That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on his love repose,
Who giveth his belovèd, sleep.

And friends, dear friends, when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, 'Not a tear must o'er her fall!
'He giveth his belovèd, sleep.'

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

CCLV

TO THE MEMORY OF MY VENERABLE GRAND-FATHER-IN-LAW, SAMUEL MARTIN, WHO WAS TAKEN FROM US IN THE SIXTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF HIS MINISTRY.

Fare well man's dark last journey o'er the deep,
Thou sire of sires! whose bow in strength hath stood
These threescore years and ten, that thou hast wooed
Men's souls to heaven. In Jesus fall'n asleep,
Around thy couch three generations weep,
Reared on thy knees with wisdom's heavenly food,
And by thy counsels taught to choose the good;
Who in thy footsteps press up Zion's steep,
To reach that temple which but now did ope
And let their father in. O'er *his* bier wake
No doleful strain, but high the note of hope
And praise uplift to God, who did him make
A faithful shepherd, of his Church a prop;
And of his seed did faithful shepherds take.

Edward Irving.

CCLVI

THE EVENING CLOUD.

A cloud lay cradled near the setting sun;
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow;
Long had I watched the glory moving on,
O'er the still radiance of the lake below;
Tranquil its spirit seemed and floated slow;
Even in its very motion there was rest;
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous West.
Emblem, methought, of the departed soul!
To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is given;
And by the breath of mercy made to roll
Right onward to the golden gates of heaven;
Where to the eye of Faith it peaceful lies,
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

John Wilson.

CCLVII

NIGHT AND DEATH.

Mysterious Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

Blanco White.

PART THE FIFTH.

CCLVIII

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN.

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay;
Now the great winds shorewards blow;
Now the salt tides seawards flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.
This way, this way.

Call her once before you go.
Call once yet,
In a voice that she will know:
'Margaret! Margaret!'
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear:
Children's voices, wild with pain:
Surely she will come again.
Call her once, and come away.
This way, this way.
'Mother dear, we cannot stay.'
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down.
Call no more.
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little gray church on the windy shore,

Then come down.
She will not come, though you call all day.
Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail, and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
She said; 'I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee.'
I said; 'Go up, dear heart, through the waves.
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves.'

She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
'The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers,' I said, 'in the world they say.
Come,' I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town.
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
'Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here.
Dear heart,' I said, 'we are long alone.
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.'
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book.
'Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.'
Come away, children, call no more.
Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down.
Down to the depths of the sea.
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark, what she sings; 'O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy,
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well,
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessèd light of the sun.'
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,

Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand;
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children,
Come, children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder,
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl,
Singing, 'Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she,
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea.'

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow;
When clear falls the moonlight;
When spring-tides are low:
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom;
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom:

Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie;
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing, 'There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she;
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea.'

Matthew Arnold.

CCLIX

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.

A CHILD'S STORY.

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin was a pity.

Rats!
They fought the dogs, and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats,
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking:
"'Tis clear,' cried they, 'our Mayor's a noddy;
And as for our Corporation—shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin!
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease?
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing!'
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

An hour they sate in council,
At length the Mayor broke silence:
'For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell;
I wish I were a mile hence!'
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I'm sure my poor head aches again
I've scratched it so, and all in vain,
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!'
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap?
'Bless us,' cried the Mayor, 'what's that?'
(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister,
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous),
'Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!'
'Come in!'—the Mayor cried, looking bigger:
And in did come the strangest figure.

His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek, nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in—
There was no guessing his kith and kin!
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one: 'It's as my great grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone.'

He advanced to the council-table:
And, 'Please your honours,' said he, 'I'm able,
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep, or swim, or fly, or run,
After me so as you never saw!
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole, and toad, and newt, and viper;
And people call me the Pied Piper.'
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same cheque;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying,
As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)
'Yet,' said he, 'poor Piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampyre bats:

And, as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders?'
'One? fifty thousand!'—was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

Into the street the Piper stept,
Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept
In his quiet pipe the while;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,
Like a candle flame where salt is sprinkled;
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,
You heard as if an army muttered;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling;
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling.
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens,
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,
Wherein all plunged and perished
—Save one, who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry
(As he the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary,
Which was, 'At the first shrill notes of the pipe,
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,

And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider-press's gripe;
And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil-flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter casks;
And it seemed as if a voice
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, Oh! rats, rejoice!
The world is grown to one vast drysaltery!
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,
All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, Come, bore me!
—I found the Weser rolling o'er me.'

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
'Go,' cried the Mayor, 'and get long poles!
Poke out the nests and block up the holes!
Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!'—when suddenly up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, 'First, if you please, my thousand guilders!'

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
For council dinners made rare havock
With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave, Hock;
And half the money would replenish
Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!

'Beside,' quoth the Mayor, with a knowing wink,
'Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But, as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.
Beside, our losses have made us thrifty;
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!'

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,
'No trifling! I can't wait, beside!
I've promised to visit by dinner-time
Bagdad, and accept the prime
Of the Head Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor—
With him I proved no bargain-driver,
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe to another fashion.'

'How?' cried the Mayor, 'd'ye think I'll brook
Being worse treated than a Cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst,
Blow your pipe there till you burst!'

Once more he stept into the street;
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air),

There was a rustling, that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hustling,
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,
Little hands clapping, and little tongues chattering,
And, like fowls in a farm-yard when barley is scattering,
Out came the children running.
All the little boys and girls,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls.
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry
To the children merrily skipping by—
And could only follow with the eye
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
But how the Mayor was on the rack,
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
As the Piper turned from the High Street
To where the Weser rolled its waters
Right in the way of their sons and daughters!
However he turned from South to West,
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,
And after him the children pressed;
Great was the joy in every breast.
'He never can cross that mighty top!
He's forced to let the piping drop,
And we shall see our children stop!'
When lo! as they reached the mountain's side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,

And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all? No! one was lame,
And could not dance the whole of the way;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say,—
'It's dull in our town since my playmates left;
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me;
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new;
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings;
And horses were born with eagle's wings;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,
The music stopped, and I stood still,
And found myself outside the Hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go now limping as before,
And never hear of that country more!'

Alas, alas for Hamelin!
There came into many a burgher's pate
A text which says, that Heaven's Gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in!
The Mayor sent East, West, North, and South,
To offer the Piper by word of mouth,
Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,

If he'd only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
Should think their records dated duly,
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
'And so long after what happened here
On the twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:'
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat,
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—
Where anyone playing on pipe or tabor,
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
To shock with mirth a street so solemn;
But opposite the place of the cavern
They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church-window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away;
And there it stands to this very day.
And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people that ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress,
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison,
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why they don't understand.

So, Willy, let you and me be wipers
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers:
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise.

Robert Browning.

CCLX

AUTUMN WOODS.

Ere, in the northern gale,
The summer tresses of the trees are gone,
The woods of Autumn, all around our vale,
Have put their glory on.

The mountains, that infold
In their wide sweep the coloured landscape round,
Seem groups of giant kings, in purple' and gold,
That guard the enchanted ground.

I roam the woods that crown
The upland, where the mingled splendours glow,
Where the gay company of trees look down
On the green fields below.

My steps are not alone
In these bright walks; the sweet south-west at play,
Flies, rustling, where the painted leaves are strown
Along the winding way.

And far in heaven, the while,
The sun, that sends that gale to wander here,
Pours out on the fair earth his quiet smile,—
The sweetest of the year.

Where now the solemn shade,
Verdure and gloom where many branches meet—
So grateful, when the noon of summer made
The valleys sick with heat?

Let in through all the trees
Come the strange rays: the forest depths are bright;
Their sunny-coloured foliage in the breeze
Twinkles, like beams of light.

The rivulet, late unseen,
Where bickering through the shrubs its waters run,
Shines with the image of its golden screen,
And glimmerings of the sun.

But 'neath yon crimson tree,
Lover to listening maid might breathe his flame,
Nor mark, within its roseate canopy,
Her blush of maiden shame.

Oh, Autumn! why so soon
Depart the hues that make thy forests glad;
Thy gentle wind and thy fair sunny noon,
And leave thee wild and sad?

Ah! 'twere a lot too blest,
For ever in thy coloured shades to stray;
Amid the kisses of the soft south-west
To rove and dream for aye;

And leave the vain low strife
That makes men mad—the tug for wealth and power,
The passions and the cares that wither life,
And waste its little hour.

William Cullen Bryant.

CCLXI

LAPSE.

A heavenly Night!—methinks to me
The soul of other times returns;
Sweet as the scents the orange-tree
Drops in the wind-flower's scarlet urns,
When sunset, like a city, burns
Across the glassy midland sea.

This night gives back that double day,
Which clothed the earth when I was young!
A light most like some godlike lay
By parted hero-angels sung:—
It stirred my heart; and through my tongue
It passed, methought,—but passed away.

The entrancement of that time is o'er,
A calmer, freer soul is here;
I dream not as I dreamed of yore,
Awake to sin, awake to fear;
I own the earth,—I see, I hear,
I feel;—oh, may I dream no more!

Farewell, wild world of bygone days,
Here let me now more safely tread!
I ask no glory's vagrant blaze,
To dance around my shining head:
Be peace and hope my crown instead,
With love, God willing, for my praise!

Thomas Burbidge.

CCLXII

THE HUMBLE-BEE.

Burly, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert-cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines:
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!

Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May-days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And, with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a colour of romance,
And, infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound,
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavoury or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap, and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,

Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste;
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce north-western blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

CCLXIII

TO A WATERFOWL.

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone-wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end,
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou' art gone—the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

William Cullen Bryant.

CCLXIV

ASPIRATION.

Joy for the promise of our loftier homes!
Joy for the promise of another birth!
For oft oppressive unto pain becomes
The riddle of the earth.

A weary weight it lay upon my youth,
Ere I could tell of what I should complain;
My very childhood was not free, in truth,
From something of that pain.

Hours of a dim despondency were there,
Like clouds that take its colour from the rose,
Which, knowing not the darkness of the air,
But its own sadness knows.

Youth grew in strength—to bear a stronger chain;
In knowledge grew—to know itself a slave;
And broke its narrower shells again, again,
To feel a wider grave.

What woe into the startled spirit sank,
When first it knew the inaudible recall,—
When first in the illimitable blank
It touched the crystal wall!

Far spreads this mystery of death and sin,
Year beyond year in gloomy tumult rolls;
And day encircling day clasps closer in
Our solitary souls.

O for the time when in our seraph wings
We veil our brows before the Eternal Throne—
The day when drinking knowledge at its springs,
We know as we are known.

Thomas Burbidge.

CCLXV

THE PALM-TREE AND THE PINE.

Beneath an Indian palm a girl
Of other blood reposes;
Her cheek is clear and pale as pearl,
Amid that wild of roses.

Beside a northern pine a boy
Is learning fancy-bound,
Nor listens where with noisy joy
Awaits the impatient hound.

Cool grows the sick and feverish calm,
Relaxt the frosty twine;
The pine-tree dreameth of the palm,
The palm-tree of the pine.

As soon shall nature interlace
Those dimly-visioned boughs,
As these young lovers face to face
Renew their early vows.

Lord Houghton.

CCLXVI

A SUMMER REMINISCENCE.

I hear no more the locust beat
His shrill loud drum through all the day;
I miss the mingled odours sweet
Of clover and of scented hay.

No more I hear the smothered song
From hedges guarded thick with thorn:
The days grow brief, the nights are long,
The light comes like a ghost at morn.

I sit before my fire alone,
And idly dream of all the past:
I think of moments that are flown—
Alas! they were too sweet to last.

The warmth that filled the languid noons—
The purple waves of trembling haze—
The liquid light of silver moons—
The summer sunset's golden blaze.

I feel the soft winds fan my cheek,
I hear them murmur through the rye,
I see the milky clouds that seek
Some nameless harbour in the sky.

The stile beside the spreading pine,
The pleasant fields beyond the grove,
The lawn where, underneath the vine,
She sang the song I used to love.

The path along the windy beach,
That leaves the shadowy linden tree,
And goes by sandy capes that reach
Their shining arms to clasp the sea.

I view them all, I tread once more
In meadow-grasses cool and deep;
I walk beside the sounding shore,
I climb again the wooded steep.

Oh, happy hours of pure delight!
Sweet moments drowned in wells of bliss!
Oh, halcyon days so calm and bright—
Each morn and evening seemed to kiss!

And that whereon I saw her first,
While angling in the noisy brook,
When through the tangled wood she burst;
In one small hand a glove and book,

As with the other, dimpled, white,
She held the slender boughs aside,
While through the leaves the yellow light
Like golden water seemed to glide.

And broke in ripples on her neck,
And played like fire around her hat,
And slid adown her form to fleck
The moss-grown rock on which I sat.

She standing rapt in sweet surprise,
And seeming doubtful if to turn;
Her novel, as I raised my eyes,
Dropped down amid the tall green fern.

This day and that—the one so bright,
The other like a thing forlorn;
To-morrow, and the early light
Will shine upon her marriage morn.

For when the mellow autumn flushed
The thickets where the chestnut fell,
And in the vales the maple blushed,
Another came who knew her well,

Who sat with her below the pine,
And with her through the meadow moved,
And underneath the purpling vine
She sang to him the song I loved.

Nathaniel G. Shepherd.

CCLXVII

SONG.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

Alfred Tennyson.

CCLXVIII

THE VIOLET.

Oh faint, delicious, spring-time violet,
Thine odour, like a key,
Turns noiselessly in memory's wards to let
A thought of sorrow free.

The breath of distant fields upon my brow
Blows through that open door,
The sound of wind-borne bells, more sweet and low
And sadder than of yore.

It comes afar, from that belovèd place,
And that belovèd hour,
When life hung ripening in love's golden grace,
Like grapes above a bower.

A spring goes singing through its reedy grass,
A lark sings o'er my head,
Drowned in the sky—O pass, ye visions, pass,
I would that I were dead!—

Why hast thou opened that forbidden door
From which I ever flee?
O vanished Joy! O Love that art no more,
Let my vexed spirit be!

O violet! thy odour through my brain
Hath searched, and stung to grief
This sunny day, as if a curse did stain
Thy velvet leaf.

William W. Story.

CCLXIX

JOY.

Sweet order hath its draught of bliss
Graced with the pearl of God's consent,
Ten times ecstatic in that 'tis
Considerate and innocent.

In vain disorder grasps the cup;
The pleasure 's not enjoyed, but spilt;
And, if he stoops to lick it up,
It only tastes of earth and guilt;
His sorry raptures rest destroys;
To live, like comets they must roam;
On settled poles turn solid joys,
And sun-like pleasures shine at home.

Coventry Patmore.

CCLXX.

THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

He safely walks in darkest ways,
Whose youth is lighted from above,
Where through the senses' silvery haze
Dawns the veiled moon of nuptial love.

Who is the happy husband? He,
Who scanning his unwedded life,
Thanks Heaven, with a conscience free,
'Twas faithful to his future wife.

Coventry Patmore.

CCLXXI

THEN.

I give thee treasures hour by hour,
That old-time princes asked in vain,
And pined for in their useless power,
Or died of passion's eager pain.

I give thee love as God gives light,
Aside from merit, or from prayer,
Rejoicing in its own delight,
And freer than the lavish air.

I give thee prayers, like jewels strung
On golden threads of hope and fear;
And tenderer thoughts than ever hung
In a sad angel's pitying tear.

As earth pours freely to the sea
Her thousand streams of wealth untold,
So flows my silent life to thee,
Glad that its very sands are gold.

What care I for thy carelessness?
I give from depths that overflow,
Regardless that their power to bless
Thy spirit cannot sound or know.

Far lingering on a distant dawn
My triumph shines, more sweet than late;
When from these mortal mists withdrawn,
Thy heart shall know me—I can wait.

Rose Terry.

CCLXXII

THE PRINCE OF ORANGE IN 1672.

If the base violence of wicked men
Prevail at last; if Charles, to please his lord,
And Louis, for his glory much concerned,
Must needs snatch from us our sea-rescued plains,
Which soon the tides will make their own again,
When once the strenuous freemen shall have fled,
At whose command they ebbed with angry bark;
If France must needs prevail and we must yield,
Then we will yield our lands, but not ourselves.
Ships we have left that will contain, I judge,
Two hundred thousand steadfast Hollanders;
And 'twixt the realms where our oppressors live
A heaving highway lies, to Dutchmen known,
And to be known hereafter in all lands—
The highway of the exodus of freedom!
Prepare then for departure, citizens;
And for the little space that yet remains,
Make much of home and of your fatherland;

Visit your fathers' graves, take note of all
The furniture of your ancestral homes,
And let your hearts take the impression off
To furnish dreams beside the Southern sea;
Fetch home at once your children from the school,
And in the garden turn them loose to play,
Nor let them want for marbles, hoops, and balls,
That in their old age they may tell their boys
Their home in the cold North was not unsweet.
If any skilful painter be among you,
At some resplendent noontide let him sit,
And paint the busiest street in Amsterdam;
Nor let him slur one stain upon a brick,
Nor smoke-dulled slip of greenery in a window;
And every old cathedral let him paint,
The columns ranged as in some grove of pines,
And windows richer than the sunset clouds,
Wherein the Christ for centuries has smiled,
And rich-robed haloed saints regarded Him;
The Colleges of Leyden and Utrecht,
The solemn libraries, with portraits hung
Of Gerard and à Kempis, let him paint,
And let him paint the Liberator's grave:
The artist that preserves our Holland for us
Shall be much honoured in our Southern home.
So, bearing with us all that can be moved,
We will weigh anchor to the sound of psalms,
And winds from heaven shall waft us to the west,
Between the shores of tyranny on the left,
And the pale cliffs of falsehood on the right;
While looking towards the north, our captains tell
To wondering maidens and exulting boys,
How through the helpless Medway's mouth they sailed,
And saw the towering Keep of Rochester;
While looking towards the south, another group
Hangs on the lips of some book-learnèd man,

Who tells the tale of Egmont and St. Quentin:
Till the low-lying shores recede from sight,
And ancient Europe hide herself in foam,
Mother of heroes, nurse of beauteous arts,
Of serious letters and high Christian truth,
Rich bower of beauty, garden fenced with men,
And gorgeous with all blooms of womanhood,
Temple inviolate of faith and truth
And liberty—until the iron time.
She for a while shall seem to us far off,
A speck of dimness on the sunbright shield,
A roughness on the fine encircling thread,
Until the horizon show a perfect ring,
And the free nation ride on vaster waves,
Plunge onward into more transparent seas,
Under more deep ambrosial domes of night,
Into that second Holland like the first,
But glad with fuller harvests, richer fruits,
Where neither Frenchmen nor rude seas encroach.

John Robertson.

CCLXXIII

THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS.

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame:
He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seemed,
Like dreams, to come and go;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleamed,
One sheet of living snow;
The smoke, above his father's door,
In gray soft eddyings hung:
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doomed by himself, so young?

Yes, honour calls!—with strength like steel
He put the vision by;
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel;
An English lad must die.
And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets, of iron framed;
Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons.
So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

Sir Francis Hastings Doyle.

CCLXXIV

ON A PICTURE BY TURNER.

See how the small concentrate fiery force
Is grappling with the glory of the main,
That follows like some grave heroic corse,
Dragged by a sutler from the heap of slain.
Thy solemn presence brings us more than pain,—
Something which Fancy moulds into remorse,
That we, who of thine honour held the gain,
Should from its dignity thy form divorce.
Yet will we read in thy high vaunting name,
How Britain *did* what France could only *dare*,
And, while the sunset gilds the darkening air,
We will fill up thy shadowy lines with fame;
And, tomb or temple, hail thee still the same,
Home of great thoughts, memorial Téméraire.

Lord Houghton.

CCLXXV

THE RHODORA:

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook;
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the marsh and sky,
Dear, tell them that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew;
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

CCLXXVI

THE GOOD PART THAT SHALL NOT BE TAKEN AWAY.

She dwells by Great Kenhawa's side,
In valleys green and cool,
And all her hope and all her pride
Are in the village school.

Her soul, like the transparent air
That robes the hills above,
Though not of earth, encircles there
All things with arms of love.

And thus she walks among her girls
With praise and mild rebukes;
Subduing e'en rude village churls
By her angelic looks.

She reads to them at eventide
Of One who came to save;
To cast the captives' chains aside,
And liberate the slave.

And oft the blessèd time foretells
When all men shall be free;
And musical as silver bells,
Their falling chains shall be.

And following her belovèd Lord
In decent poverty,
She makes her life one sweet record
And deed of charity.

For she was rich, and gave up all
To break the iron bands
Of those who waited in her hall,
And laboured in her lands.

Long since beyond the Southern Sea
Their outbound sails have sped,
While she in meek humility,
Now earns her daily bread.

It is their prayers which never cease,
That clothe her with such grace:
Their blessing is the light of peace,
That shines upon her face.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

CCLXXVII

IN WAR TIME.

The flags of war like storm-birds fly,
The charging trumpets blow;
Yet rolls no thunder in the sky,
No earthquake strives below.

And, calm and patient, Nature keeps
Her ancient promise well,
Though o'er her bloom and greenness sweeps
The battle's breath of hell.

And still she walks in golden hours
Through harvest-happy farms,
And still she wears her fruits and flowers
Like jewels on her arms.

What mean the gladness of the plain,
This joy of eve and morn,
The mirth that shakes the beard of grain
And yellow locks of corn?

Ah! eyes may well be full of tears,
And hearts with hate are hot;
But even-paced come round the years,
And Nature changes not.

She meets with smiles our bitter grief,
With songs our groans of pain;
She mocks with tint of flower and leaf
The war-field's crimson stain.

Still, in the cannon's pause we hear
Her sweet thanksgiving psalm;
Too near to God for doubt or fear,
She shares the eternal calm.

She knows the seed lies safe below
The fires that blast and burn;
For all the tears of blood we sow
She waits the rich return.

She sees with clearer eye than ours
The good of suffering born,—
The hearts that blossom like her flowers,
And ripen like her corn.

O, give to us, in times like these,
The vision of her eyes;
And make her fields and fruited trees
Our golden prophecies!

O, give to us her finer ear!
Above this stormy din,
We too would hear the bells of cheer
Ring peace and freedom in!

John George Whittier.

CCLXXVIII

COME UP FROM THE FIELDS, FATHER.

Come up from the fields, father; here's a letter from our Pete,
And come to the front door, mother; here's a letter from thy dear son.
Lo, 'tis autumn;
Lo where the fields, deeper green, yellower and redder,

Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages, with leaves fluttering in the moderate wind;
Where apples ripe in the orchards hang, and grapes on the trellised vines
(Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
Smell you the buckwheat, where the bees were lately buzzing?)

Above all, lo! the sky, so calm, so transparent after the rain and with wondrous clouds;
Below too all calm, all vital and beautiful—and the farm prospers well.

Down in the fields all prospers well;
But now from the fields come, father—come at the daughter's call;
And come to the entry, mother—to the front door come, right away.

Fast as she can she hurries—something ominous—her steps trembling;
She does not tarry to smooth her white hair, nor adjust her cap.

Open the envelope quickly;
Oh this is not our son's writing, yet his name is signed.
Oh a strange hand writes for our dear son—oh stricken mother's soul!
All swims before her eyes—flashes with black—she catches the main words only;
Sentences broken—*gunshot wound in the breast—cavalry skirmish, taken to hospital,*
At present low, but will soon be better.

Ah! now the single figure to me
Amid all teeming and wealthy Ohio, with all its cities and farms,
Sickly white in the face and dull in the head, very faint,
By the jamb of a door leans.

Grieve not so, dear mother (the just grown daughter speaks through her sobs;
The little sisters huddle around, speechless and dismayed).
See, dearest mother, the letter says Pete will soon be better.

Alas, poor boy, he will never be better (nor, may be, needs to be better, that brave and simple soul).
While they stand at home at the door he is dead already,
The only son is dead.

But the mother needs to be better;
She, with thin form, presently drest in black;
By day her meals untouched—then at night fitfully sleeping, often waking,
In the midnight waking, weeping, longing with one deep longing,
Oh, that she might withdraw unnoticed, silent from life, escape and withdraw
To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son.

Walt Whitman.

CCLXXIX

SONNET.

Through the night, through the night,
In the saddest unrest,
Wrapt in white, all in white,
With her babe on her breast,
Walks the mother so pale,
Staring out on the gale
Through the night!

Through the night, through the night,
Where the sea lifts the wreck,
Land in sight, close in sight!
On the surf-flooded deck
Stands the father so brave,
Drawing on to his grave
Through the night!

Richard Henry Stoddard.

CCLXXX

A DEDICATION TO CHARLES DICKENS OF THE LIFE OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Genius and its rewards are briefly told
A liberal nature and a niggard doom,
A difficult journey to a splendid tomb.
New writ, nor lightly weighed that story old
In gentle Goldsmith's life I here unfold:
Through other than lone wild or desert gloom,
In its mere joy and pain, its blight and bloom,
Adventurous. Come with me and behold,
O friend with heart as gentle for distress,
As resolute with wise true thoughts to bind
The happiest to the unhappiest of our kind,
That there is fiercer crowded misery
In garret toil and London loneliness
Than in cruel islands mid the far-off sea.

John Forster.

CCLXXXI

SONNET.

Sad is our youth, for it is ever going,
Crumbling away beneath our very feet;
Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing
In current unperceived, because so fleet;
Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing—
But tares, self-sown, have over-topped the wheat;
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing—
And still, oh still, their dying breath is sweet;
And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
Of that which made our childhood sweeter still;
And sweet is middle life, for it hath left us
A newer good to cure an older ill;
And sweet are all things when we learn to prize them
Not for their sake, but His who grants them or denies them.

Aubrey De Vere.

CCLXXXII

THE UGLY PRINCESS.

My parents bow, and lead them forth,
For all the crowd to see—
Ah well! the people might not care
To cheer a dwarf like me.

They little know how I could love,
How I could plan and toil,
To swell those drudges' scanty gains,
Their mites of rye and oil.

They little know what dreams have been
My playmates, night and day,
Of equal kindness, helpful care,
A mother's perfect sway.

Now earth to earth in convent walls,
To earth in churchyard sod:
I was not good enough for man,
And so am given to God.

Charles Kingsley.

CCLXXXIII

WEARINESS.

O little feet! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
  Must ache and bleed beneath your load;
I, nearer to the wayside inn
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
  Am weary, thinking of your road!

O little hands! that, weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
  Have still so long to give or ask;
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow-men,
  Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat
With such impatient feverish heat,
  Such limitless and strong desires;
Mine that so long has glowed and burned
With passions into ashes turned,
  Now covers and conceals its fires.

O little souls! as pure and white
And crystalline as rays of light
  Direct from Heaven, their source divine;
Refracted through the mist of years,
How red my setting sun appears,
  How lurid looks this soul of mine!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

CCLXXXIV

SONG.

'O lady, thy lover is dead,' they cried;
'He is dead, but hath slain the foe;
He hath left his name to be magnified
In a song of wonder and woe.'

'Alas! I am well repaid,' said she,
'With a pain that stings like joy;
For I feared, from his tenderness to me,
That he was but a feeble boy.

'Now I shall hold my head on high,
The queen among my kind.
If ye hear a sound, 'tis only a sigh
For a glory left behind.'

George MacDonald.

CCLXXXV

SONNET.

A hundred wings are dropt as soft as one;
Now ye are lighted—lovely to my sight
The fearful circle of your gentle flight,
Rapid and mute, and drawing homeward soon:
And then the sober chiding of your tone,
As ye sit there from your own roofs arraigning
My trespass on your haunts, so boldly done,
Sounds like a solemn and a just complaining!
O happy, happy race! for though there clings
A feeble fear about your timid clan,
Yet are ye blest! with not a thought that brings
Disquietude, while proud and sorrowing man,
An eagle weary of his mighty wings,
With anxious inquest fills his little span.

Charles Tennyson.

CCLXXXVI

SONNET.

The Ocean at the bidding of the Moon
For ever changes with his restless tide:
Flung shoreward now, to be regathered soon
With kingly pauses of reluctant pride,
And semblance of return. Anon from home
He issues forth anew, high-ridged and free—
The gentlest murmur of his seething foam
Like armies whispering where great echoes be.
O leave me here upon this beach to rove,
Mute listener to that sound so grand and lone;
A glorious sound, deep drawn, and strongly thrown,
And reaching those on mountain heights above,
To British ears, (as who shall scorn to own?)
A tutelar fond voice, a saviour tone of love.

Charles Tennyson.

CCLXXXVII

ALMOND BLOSSOM.

Blossom of the almond trees,
April's gift to April's bees,
Birthday ornament of spring,
Flora's fairest daughterling;
Coming when no flowerets dare
Trust the cruel outer air;
When the royal kingcup bold
Dares not don his coat of gold;
And the sturdy black-thorn spray
Keeps his silver for the May;—
Coming when no flowerets would,
Save thy lowly sisterhood,
Early violets, blue and white,
Dying for their love of light.
Almond blossom, sent to teach us
That the spring-days soon will reach us,
Lest, with longing over-tried,
We die as the violets died—
Blossom, clouding all the tree
With thy crimson broidery,
Long before a leaf of green
O'er the bravest bough is seen;
Ah! when winter winds are swinging
All thy red bells into ringing,
With a bee in every bell,
Almond bloom, we greet thee well.

Edwin Arnold.

CCLXXXVIII

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD.

Oh to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,

That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough,
In England, now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds and all the swallows!
Hark where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field, and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups—the little children's dower,—
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower.

Robert Browning.

CCLXXXIX

HOME THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA.

Nobly, nobly Cape St. Vincent to the North-west died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest North-east distance, dawned Gibraltar grand and gray;
'Here and here did England help me; how can I help England?' say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

Robert Browning.

CCXC

JAMES AND JOHN.

Two brothers freely cast their lot
With David's royal Son;
The cost of conquest counting not,
They deem the battle won.

Brothers in heart, they hope to gain
An undivided joy;
That man may one with man remain,
As boy was one with boy.

Christ heard; and willed that James should fall,
First prey of Satan's rage;
John linger out his fellows all,
And die in bloodless age.

Now they join hands once more above,
Before the Conqueror's throne;
Thus God grants prayer, but in his love
Makes times and ways his own.

John Henry Newman.

CCXCI

IN MEMORIAM.

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
Sailest the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain; a favourable speed
Ruffle thy mirrored mast, and lead
Through prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
As our pure love, through early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above;
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow;
Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,
My friend, the brother of my love.

My Arthur! whom I shall not see
Till all my widowed race be run;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me.

Alfred Tennyson.

CCXCII

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE HON. EDWARD ERNEST VILLIERS.

A grace though melancholy, manly too,
Moulded his being; pensive, grave, serene,
O'er his habitual bearing and his mien
Unceasing pain, by patience tempered, threw
A shade of sweet austerity. But seen
In happier hours and by the friendly few,
That curtain of the spirit was withdrawn,
And fancy light and playful as a fawn,
And reason imped with inquisition keen,
Knowledge long sought with ardour ever new,
And wit love-kindled, showed in colours true
What genial joys with sufferings can consist;
Then did all sternness melt as melts a mist
Touched by the brightness of the golden dawn,
Aërial heights disclosing, valleys green,
And sunlights thrown the woodland tufts between,
And flowers and spangles of the dewy lawn.

And even the stranger, though he saw not these,
Saw what would not be willingly passed by.
In his deportment, even when cold and shy,
Was seen a clear collectedness and ease,
A simple grace and gentle dignity,
That failed not at the first accost to please;
And as reserve relented by degrees,
So winning was his aspect and address,
His smile so rich in sad felicities,
Accordant to a voice which charmed no less,
That who but saw him once remembered long,
And some in whom such images are strong
Have hoarded the impression in their heart,
Fancy's fond dreams and memory's joys among,
Like some loved relic of romantic song,
Or cherished masterpiece of ancient art.

His life was private; safely led, aloof
From the loud world,—which yet he understood
Largely and wisely, as no worldling could.
For he by privilege of his nature proof
Against false glitter, from beneath the roof
Of privacy, as from a cave, surveyed
With stedfast eye its flickering light and shade,
And gently judged for evil and for good.
But whilst he mixed not for his own behoof
In public strife, his spirit glowed with zeal,
Not shorn of action, for the public weal,—
For truth and justice as its warp and woof,
For freedom as its signature and seal.
His life thus sacred from the world, discharged
From vain ambition and inordinate care,
In virtue exercised, by reverence rare
Lifted, and by humility enlarged,
Became a temple and a place of prayer.
In latter years he walked not singly there;
For one was with him ready at all hours

His griefs, his joys, his inmost thoughts to share,
Who buoyantly his burdens helped to bear,
And decked his altars daily with fresh flowers.

But further may we pass not; for the ground
Is holier than the Muse herself may tread;
Nor would I it should echo to a sound
Less solemn than the service for the dead.
Mine is inferior matter,—my own loss,—
The loss of dear delights for ever fled,
Of reason's converse by affection fed,
Of wisdom, counsel, solace, that across
Life's dreariest tracts a tender radiance shed.
Friend of my youth! though younger, yet my guide,
How much by thy unerring insight clear
I shaped my way of life for many a year!
What thoughtful friendship on thy deathbed died!
Friend of my youth! whilst thou wast by my side
Autumnal days still breathed a vernal breath;
How like a charm thy life to me supplied
All waste and injury of time and tide,
How like a disenchantment was thy death!

Henry Taylor.

CCXCIII

FOR CHARLIE'S SAKE.

The night is late, the house is still;
The angels of the hour fulfil
Their tender ministries, and move
From couch to couch, in cares of love.
They drop into thy dreams, sweet wife,
The happiest smile of Charlie's life,
And lay on baby's lips a kiss,
Fresh from his angel-brother's bliss;
And, as they pass, they seem to make
A strange, dim hymn, 'For Charlie's sake.'

My listening heart takes up the strain,
And gives it to the night again,
Fitted with words of lowly praise,
And patience learned of mournful days,
And memories of the dead child's ways.

His will be done, his will be done!
Who gave and took away my son,
In the 'far land' to shine and sing
Before the Beautiful, the King,
Who every day doth Christmas make,
All starred and belled for Charlie's sake.

For Charlie's sake I will arise;
I will anoint me where he lies,
And change my raiment, and go in
To the Lord's house, and leave my sin
Without, and seat me at his board,
Eat, and be glad, and praise the Lord.
For wherefore should I fast and weep,
And sullen moods of mourning keep?
I cannot bring him back, nor he,
For any calling, come to me.
The bond the angel Death did sign,
God sealed—for Charlie's sake and mine.

I'm very poor—this slender stone
Marks all the narrow field I own;
Yet, patient husbandman, I till,
With faith and prayers, that precious hill,
Sow it with penitential pains,
And, hopeful, wait the latter rains;
Content if, after all, the spot
Yield barely one forget-me-not—
Whether or figs or thistles make
My crop, content for Charlie's sake.

I have no houses, builded well—
Only that little lonesome cell,
Where never romping playmates come,
Nor bashful sweethearts, cunning-dumb—
An April burst of girls and boys,
Their rainbowed cloud of glooms and joys
Born with their songs, gone with their toys;
Nor ever is its stillness stirred
By purr of cat, or chirp of bird,
Or mother's twilight legend, told
Of Horner's pie, or Tiddler's gold,
Or fairy hobbling to the door,
Red-cloaked and weird, banned and poor,
To bless the good child's gracious eyes,
The good child's wistful charities,
And crippled changeling's hunch to make
Dance on his crutch, for good child's sake.

How is it with the child? 'Tis well;
Nor would I any miracle
Might stir my sleeper's tranquil trance,
Or plague his painless countenance:
I would not any seer might place
His staff on my immortal's face,
Or lip to lip, and eye to eye,
Charm back his pale mortality.
No, Shunamite! I would not break
God's stillness. Let them weep who wake;
For Charlie's sake my lot is blest:
No comfort like his mother's breast,
No praise like hers; no charm expressed
In fairest forms hath half her zest.
For Charlie's sake this bird's caressed,
That death left lonely in the nest;
For Charlie's sake my heart is dressed,

As for its birthday, in its best;
For Charlie's sake we leave the rest
To Him who gave, and who did take,
And saved us twice, for Charlie's sake.

John Williamson Palmer.

CCXCIV

THE LEGEND OF THE STEPMOTHER.

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
Under the grass as I lay so deep,
As I lay asleep in my cotton sirk
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
I wakened up in the dead of night,
I wakened up in my death-sirk white,
And I heard a cry from far away,
And I knew the voice of my daughter May.
'Mother, mother, come hither to me!
Mother, mother, come hither and see!
Mother, mother, mother dear,
Another mother is sitting here:
My body is bruised, and in pain I cry;
On straw in the dark afraid I lie;
I thirst and hunger for drink and meat,
And, mother, mother, to sleep were sweet!'
I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep.

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
Up I rose from my grave so deep!
The earth was black, but overhead
The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
And I walked along all white and thin,
And lifted the latch and entered in,
And reached the chamber as dark as night,
And though it was dark, my face was white.

'Mother, mother, I look on thee!
Mother, mother, you frighten me!
For your cheeks are thin, and your hair is gray.'
But I smiled, and kissed her fears away,
I smoothed her hair, and I sang a song,
And on my knee I rocked her long:
'O mother, mother, sing low to me;
I am sleepy now, and I cannot see!'
I kissed her, but I could not weep,
And she went to sleep, she went to sleep.

As we lay asleep, as we lay asleep,
My May and I, in our grave so deep,
As we lay asleep in the midnight mirk,
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
I wakened up in the dead of night,
Though May, my daughter, lay warm and white,
And I heard the cry of a little one,
And I knew 'twas the voice of Hugh my son.
'Mother, mother, come hither to me!
Mother, mother, come hither and see!
Mother, mother, mother dear,
Another mother is sitting here:
My body is bruised and my heart is sad,
But I speak my mind and call them bad;
I thirst and hunger night and day,
And were I strong I would fly away!'
I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep.

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
Up I rose from my grave so deep;
The earth was black, but overhead
The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
And I walked along all white and thin,
And lifted the latch and entered in.
'Mother, mother, and art thou here?
I know your face, and I feel no fear;

Raise me, mother, and kiss my cheek,
For oh I am weary, and sore, and weak.'
I smoothed his hair with a mother's joy,
And he laughed aloud, my own brave boy;
I raised and held him on my breast,
Sang him a song and bade him rest.
'Mother, mother, sing low to me;
I am sleepy now, and I cannot see!'
I kissed him, and I could not weep,
As he went to sleep, as he went to sleep.

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
With my girl and boy in my grave so deep,
As I lay asleep, I awoke in fear,
Awoke, but awoke not my children dear,
And heard a cry so low and weak
From a tiny voice that could not speak;
I heard the cry of a little one,
My bairn that could neither talk nor run,
My little little one, uncaressed,
Starving for lack of the milk of the breast;
And I rose from sleep and entered in,
And found my little one pinched and thin,
And crooned a song and hushed its moan,
And put its lips to my white breast-bone;
And the red, red moon that lit the place
Went white to look at the little face,
And I kissed and kissed, and I could not weep,
As it went to sleep, as it went to sleep.

As it lay asleep, as it lay asleep,
I set it down in the darkness deep,
Smoothed its limbs and laid it out,
And drew the curtains around about;
Then into the dark, dark room I hied,
Where he lay awake at the woman's side,

And, though the chamber was black as night,
He saw my face, for it was so white;
I gazed in his eyes, and he shrieked in pain,
And I knew he would never sleep again,
And back to my grave went silently,
And soon my baby was brought to me;
My son and daughter beside me rest,
My little baby is on my breast;
Our bed is warm, and our grave is deep,
But he cannot sleep, he cannot sleep!

Robert Buchanan.

CCXCV

THE SANDS OF DEE.

'O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee;'
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

The creeping tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The blinding mist came down, and hid the land:
And never home came she.

'Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee.'

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee.

Charles Kingsley.

CCXCVI

A DIRGE.

Softly! she is lying
With her lips apart:
Softly! she is dying
Of a broken heart.

Whisper! she is going
To her final rest:
Whisper! life is growing
Dim within her breast.

Gently! she is sleeping,
She has breathed her last:
Gently! while you' are weeping,
She to Heaven has past.

Charles Gamage Eastman.

CCXCVII

DEATH AND LIFE.

Her sufferings ended with the day!
Yet lived she at its close,
And breathed the long long night away
In statuelike repose.

But when the Sun in all his state
Illumed the eastern skies,
She passed through glory's morning gate,
And walked in Paradise.

James Aldrich.

CCXCVIII

TITHONUS.

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,
Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only cruel immortality
Consumes: I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-haired shadow roaming like a dream
The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man—
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seemed
To his great heart none other than a God!
I asked thee, 'Give me immortality.'
Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant worked their wills,
And beat me down and marred and wasted me,
And though they could not end me, left me maimed
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, though even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
To hear me? Let me go: take back thy gift:
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart; there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals
From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,
And bosom beating with a heart renewed.
Thy cheek begins to redden through the gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their loosened manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?
'The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts.'

Ay me! ay me! with what another heart
In days far-off, and with what other eyes
I used to watch—if I be he that watched—
The lucid outline forming round thee; saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood
Glow with the glow that slowly crimsoned all
Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-opening buds
Of April, and could hear the lips that kissed
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East:
How can my nature longer mix with thine?

Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
Of happy men that have the power to die,
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me, and restore me to the ground;
Thou seëst all things, thou wilt see my grave;
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn;
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

Alfred Tennyson.

CCXCIX

THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE.

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean:
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one,
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

'Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

'Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.'

Alfred Tennyson.

CCC

SONNET.

Rise, said the Master, come unto the feast:
She heard the call and rose with willing feet;
But thinking it not otherwise than meet
For such a bidding to put on her best,
She is gone from us for a few short hours
Into her bridal closet, there to wait
For the unfolding of the palace gate,
That gives her entrance to the blissful bowers.
We have not seen her yet, though we have been
Full often to her chamber door, and oft
Have listened underneath the postern green,
And laid fresh flowers, and whispered short and soft;
But she hath made no answer, and the day
From the clear west is fading fast away.

Henry Alford.

CCCI

THE VOICELESS.

We count the broken lyres that rest
Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,
But o'er their silent sister's breast
The wild flowers who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
And noisy fame is proud to win them;
Alas for those that never sing,
But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone,
Whose song has told their hearts' sad story:
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break, and give no sign,
  Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his cordial wine,
  Slow-dropped from misery's crushing presses!
If singing breath or echoing chord
  To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
  As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

CCCII

A THANKSGIVING.

Lord, in this dust thy sovereign voice
First quickened love divine;
I am all thine—thy care and choice,
My very praise is thine.

I praise Thee, while thy providence
In childhood frail I trace,
For blessings given, ere dawning sense
Could seek or scan thy grace;

Blessings in boyhood's marvelling hour,
Bright dreams and fancyings strange;
Blessings, when reason's awful power
Gave thought a bolder range;

Blessings of friends, which to my door
Unasked, unhoped, have come;
And choicer still, a countless store
Of eager smiles at home.

Yet, Lord, in memory's fondest place
I shrine those seasons sad,
When looking up, I saw thy face
In kind austereness clad.

I would not miss one sigh or tear,
Heart-pang or throbbing brow;
Sweet was the chastisement severe,
And sweet its memory now.

Yes! let the fragrant scars abide,
Love-tokens in thy stead,
Faint shadows of the spear-pierced side,
And thorn-encompassed head.

And such thy tender force be still,
When self would swerve or stray,
Shaping to truth the froward will
Along thy narrow way.

Deny me wealth; far, far remove
The lure of power or name;
Hope thrives in straits, in weakness love,
And faith in this world's shame.

John Henry Newman.

CCCIII

THE GRAVE.

I stood within the grave's o'ershadowing vault;
Gloomy and damp it stretched its vast domain;
Shades were its boundary; for my strained eye sought
For other limit to its width in vain.

Faint from the entrance came a daylight ray,
And distant sound of living men and things;
This, in the encountering darkness passed away,
That, took the tone in which a mourner sings.

I lit a torch at a sepulchral lamp,
Which shot a thread of light amid the gloom;
And feebly burning 'gainst the rolling damp,
I bore it through the regions of the tomb.

Around me stretched the slumbers of the dead,
Whereof the silence ached upon mine ear;
More and more noiseless did I make my tread,
And yet its echoes chilled my heart with fear.

The former men of every age and place,
From all their wanderings gathered, round me lay;
The dust of withered empires did I trace,
And stood 'mid generations past away.

I saw whole cities, that in flood or fire,
Or famine or the plague, gave up their breath;
Whole armies whom a day beheld expire,
By thousands swept into the arms of Death.

I saw the old world's white and wave-swept bones,
A giant heap of creatures that had been;
Far and confused the broken skeletons
Lay strewn beyond mine eye's remotest ken.

Death's various shrines—the Urn, the Stone, the Lamp—
Were scattered round, confused, amid the dead;
Symbols and Types were mouldering in the damp,
Their shapes were waning, and their meaning fled.

Unspoken tongues, perchance in praise or woe,
Were charactered on tablets Time had swept;
And deep were half their letters hid below
The thick small dust of those they once had wept.

No hand was here to wipe the dust away;
No reader of the writing traced beneath;
No spirit sitting by its form of clay;
Nor sigh nor sound from all the heaps of Death.

One place alone had ceased to hold its prey;
A form had pressed it and was there no more;
The garments of the Grave beside it lay,
Where once they wrapped Him on the rocky floor.

He only with returning footsteps broke
The eternal calm wherewith the Tomb was bound;
Among the sleeping Dead alone He woke,
And blessed with outstretched hands the host around.

Well is it that such blessing hovers here,
To soothe each sad survivor of the throng
Who haunt the portals of the solemn sphere,
And pour their woe the loaded air along.

They to the verge have followed that they love,
And on the insuperable threshold stand;
With cherished names its speechless calm reprove,
And stretch in the abyss their ungrasped hand.

But vainly there the mourners seek relief
From silenced voice, and shapes, Decay has swept,
Till Death himself shall medicine their grief,
Closing their eyes by those o'er whom they wept.

All that have died, the Earth's whole race, repose,
Where Death collects his treasures, heap on heap;
O'er each one's busy day the nightshades close;
Its Actors, Sufferers, Schools, Kings, Armies—sleep.

'*V.*'

CCCIV

MY PSALM.

I mourn no more my vanished years:
Beneath a tender rain,
An April rain of smiles and tears,
My heart is young again.

The west winds blow, and singing low,
I hear the glad streams run;
The windows of my soul I throw
Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward, nor behind,
I look in hope and fear:
But grateful, take the good I find,
The best of now, and here.

I plough no more a desert land
For harvest, weed and tare;
The manna dropping from God's hand
Rebukes my painful care.

I break my pilgrim staff, I lay
Aside the toiling oar;
The angel sought so far away
I welcome at my door.

The airs of spring may never play
Among the ripening corn,
Nor freshness of the flowers of May
Blow through the autumn morn;

Yet shall the blue-eyed gentian look
Through fringèd lids to heaven,
And the pale aster in the brook
Shall see its image given;

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,
The south-wind softly sigh,
And sweet calm days in golden haze
Melt down the amber sky.

Not less shall manly deed and word
Rebuke an age of wrong:
The graven flowers that wreathe the sword
Make not the blade less strong.

Enough that blessings undeserved
Have marked my erring track,
That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,
His chastening turned me back;

That more and more a Providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good;

That death seems but a covered way,
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight;

That care and trial seem at last,
Through memory's sunset air,
Like mountain ranges overpast
In purple distance fair;

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west winds play:
And all the windows of my heart
I open to this day.

John Greenleaf Whittier.

NOTES.

P. 3, No. iii.—There seems no reason to doubt that Sir Walter Raleigh was the author of this poem, and that the initials W. R. with which it appears in Davison's *Rhapsody* indicate truly the authorship. It is abundantly worthy of him; there have been seldom profounder thoughts more perfectly expressed than in the fourth and fifth stanzas. A certain obscurity in the poem will demand, but will also repay, study; and for its right understanding we must keep in mind that 'affection' is here used as in our English Bible, where it is the rendering of πάθος (Rom. i. 26; Col. 3, 5), and that 'affection' and 'desire' are regarded as interchangeable and equivalent.

P. 4, No. iv.—See Spedding's *Works of Lord Bacon*, vol. vii. p. 267 sqq., for the external evidence making it reasonably probable, but certainly not lifting above all doubt, that the ascription of these lines to Lord Bacon is a right one.

P. 6, No. vi.—This very remarkable poem first appeared in the second edition of Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody*, 1608; itself a sufficient disproof of the often-repeated assertion that Raleigh wrote it the night before his execution, 1618. At the same time this leaves untouched the question whether he may not at some earlier day have been its author. There is a certain amount of evidence in favour of this tradition, which is carefully put together in Hannah's *Poems by Sir Henry Wotton, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others*, 1845, pp. 89–98.

P. 10, No. viii.—The author of these beautiful lines was a minister of the Scotch Kirk at the close of the sixteenth century. Several stanzas have been omitted.

P. 21, No. xviii.—This sonnet is the first among the commendatory poems prefixed to the original edition of *The Fairy Queen*. As original in conception as it is grand in execution, it is about the finest compliment which was ever paid by poet to poet, such as it became Raleigh to indite and Spenser to receive. Yet it labours under a serious defect. The great poets of the past lose no whit of their glory because later poets are found worthy to share it. Petrarch in his lesser, and Homer in his greater sphere, are just as illustrious since Spenser appeared as before.

P. 23, No. xx.—I have marked this poem as anonymous, the evidence which ascribes it to Sir Walter Raleigh being insufficient to prove him the author of it. It first appeared in *England's Helicon*, 1600. In all known copies of this edition 'Ignoto' has been pasted over W. R., the original signature which the poem bore. This may have arisen from a discovery on the part of the editor that the poem was not Raleigh's; but also may be explained by his unwillingness to have his authorship of it declared; so that there is here nothing decisive one way or the other. Other external evidence bearing on the question I believe there is none, except Izaak Walton's assertion fifty-three years later (*Complete Angler*, 1653, p. 64) that it 'was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days.' No doubt then there was a tradition to this effect; though 'younger' must not be pushed too far, as Raleigh was ten years older than Marlowe, to whose poem this is a reply. All that we can say is that there is no name in English literature so great, but that the authorship of these lines, if this could be ascertained, would be an additional honour to it.—l. 21–24: In the *second* edition of Walton's *Complete Angler*, 1655, this stanza appears—I should say, for the first time, were not this fact brought into question by its nearly contemporaneous appearance in a broad-sheet (see *Roxburgh Ballads*, vol. i. p. 205) which seems by its type to belong, as those expert in such matters affirm, to the date 1650–55. The stanza there runs,

> 'What should you talk of dainties then!
> Of better meat than serveth men?
> All that is vain; this only good,
> Which God doth bless and send for food.'

While Walton may have made, it is also possible that he may have found ready made to his hand, this beautiful addition to the poem.

P. 24, No. xxii.—Of this poem Dr. Guest (*History of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 273) has said, 'It appears to me extremely beautiful,' a judgment from which none who are capable of recognizing poetry when they see it will dissent. It is found in Campion's *Observations on the Art of English Poesy*, London, 1602. The purpose of the book is mainly to prove that rhyme is altogether an unnecessary appendage to English verse; that this does not require, and indeed is better without it. Had he offered to his readers many lyrics like this, he might have done much more than by all his arguments he has done to bring them to his opinion. As it is, the main value which the *Observations* possess consists in this exquisite lyric, and, mediately, in the admirable *Apology for Rhyme* on Daniel's part which they called out.

Pp. 27, 28, No. xxv. xxvi.—Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets may be 'vain and amatorious,' as Milton has called his prose romance of *The*

Arcadia; but they possess grace, fancy, and a passion which makes itself felt even under the artificial forms of a Platonic philosophy. They are addressed to one, who, if the course of true love had run smooth, should have been his wife. When, however, through the misunderstanding of parents, or through some other cause, she had become the wife of another, Platonic as they are, they would far better have remained unwritten.

P. 35, No. xli.—Pope somewhere speaks of 'a very mediocre poet, one Drayton,' and it will be remembered that when Goldsmith visited Poets' Corner, seeing his monument he exclaimed, 'Drayton, I never heard of him before.' It must be confessed that Drayton, who wrote far too much, wrote often below himself, and has left not a little to justify the censure of the one, and to excuse the ignorance of the other. At the same time only a poet could describe the sun at his rising,

'With rosy robes and crown of flaming gold;'

and this heroic ballad has a very genuine and martial tone about it. It is true that every celebration of Agincourt must show pale and faint beside Shakespeare's epic drama, *Henry the Fifth*, and this will as little endure as any other to be brought even into remote comparison with that; but for all this it ought not to be forgotten.

P. 39, No. xlii. l. 9: 'Clarius,' a surname of Apollo, derived from his famous temple at Claros, in Asia Minor.—l. 27–30: Prometheus was 'Japhet's line,' being the son of Iapetus, whom Jonson has not resisted the temptation of identifying, as others have done, with Japhet the son of Noah, and calling by his name. According to one legend it was by the assistance of Minerva, 'the issue of Jove's brain,' that Prometheus ascended to heaven, and there stole from the chariot of the Sun the fire which he brought down to earth; to all which there is reference here.

P. 40, No. xliii.—It would be difficult not to think that we had here the undeveloped germ of *Il Penseroso* of Milton, if this were not shown to be impossible by the fact that Milton's poem was published two years previously to this.

P. 41, No. xliv.—Hallam thinks that Southwell has been of late praised at least as much as he deserves. This may be so, yet taking into account the finished beauty of such poems as this and No. l. of this collection, poems which, as far as they go, leave nothing to be desired, he has scarcely been praised *more* than he deserves. How in earlier times he was rated the fact that there were twenty-four editions of his poems will sufficiently testify; though possibly the creed which he professed, and the death which he died, may have had something to do with this. Robert Southwell was a seminary priest,

and was executed at Tyburn in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in conformity with a law, which even the persistent plottings of too many of these at once against the life of the Sovereign and the life of the State must altogether fail to justify or excuse.

P. 44, No. xlvi.—The judgment of one great poet on another his contemporary, must always have a true interest for us, and it was with serious regret that I omitted Ben Jonson's ever-memorable lines on Shakespeare. Many things a contemporary sees, as none who belong to a later time can see them; knows, as none other can know; and even where he does not tell us much which we greatly care to learn about the other, he is sure to tell us something, whether he means it or not, about himself and about his age. English literature possesses many judgments of this kind. What Ben Jonson did for Shakespeare, Cartwright, a strong-thoughted writer if not an eminent poet, and more briefly Cleveland here, have done in turn for Jonson; Denham for Cowley; Cowley for Crashaw; Carew for Donne; Marvell for Milton; Dryden for Oldham. There is not one of these which may not be read with profit by the careful student of English literature; and certainly Cleveland must be allowed very happily to have seized here some of the main excellences of Jonson.

P. 45, No. xlvii.—Another poem on the same subject, in Byrd's *Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs*, is as a whole inferior to this, but yields one stanza which is equal in merit to any here:

'I wish but what I have at will;
I wander not to seek for more;
I like the plain; I climb no hill;
In greatest storms I sit on shore;
And laugh at them that toil in vain
To get what must be lost again.'

P. 46, No. xlix.—Shakespeare's Sonnets are so heavily laden with meaning, so double-shotted, if one may so speak, with thought, so penetrated and pervaded with a repressed passion, that, packed as all this is into narrowest limits, it sometimes imparts no little obscurity to them; and they often require to be heard or read not once but many times, in fact to be studied, before they reveal to us all the treasures of thought and feeling which they contain. It is eminently so with this one. The subject, the bitter delusion of all sinful pleasures, the reaction of a swift remorse which inevitably dogs them, Shakespeare must have most deeply felt, as he has expressed himself upon it most profoundly. I know no picture of this at all so terrible in its truth as in *The Rape of Lucrece* the description of Tarquin after he has successfully wrought his deed of shame. But this sonnet on the same theme is worthy to stand by its side.

P. 48, No. lii.—These lines are appended to the second edition of Wastell's *Microbiblion*, 1629; they are not found in the first,

published under another title in 1623. I have not disturbed the ascription of them to him, although, considering the general worthlessness of the book, it must be considered very doubtful indeed. On the question of the authorship of these lines see Hannah, *Poems and Psalms of Henry King*, 1843, p. cxviii.

P. 57, No. lxii.—There are at least half-a-dozen texts of this poem with an infinite variety of readings, these being particularly numerous in the third stanza, which I must needs think corrupt as it now stands. The *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ*, in which it was first published, appeared in 1651, some twelve years after Wotton's death; but much earlier MS. copies are in existence; thus one in the handwriting of Edward Alleyn, apparently of date 1616. Ben Jonson visited Drummond of Hawthornden two or three years later, and is reported by him to have had these lines by heart.

P. 58, No. lxiii.—This poem Bishop Percy believes to have been first printed in a volume of *Miscellaneous Poems by different hands*, published by David Lewis, 1726. The date and authorship is discussed on several occasions in *Notes and Queries*, vol. iii. (1st Series) pp. 27, 108, 155, but without much light being thrown upon either.

P. 60, No. lxv.—Carew is commonly grouped with Waller, and subordinated to him. He is indeed immensely his superior. Waller never wrote a love-song in grace and fancy to compare with this; while in many of Carew's lighter pieces there is an underlying vein of earnestness, which is wholly wanting in the other.

P. 62, No. lxviii.—Waller's fame has sadly, but not undeservedly, declined since the time when it used to be taken for granted that he had virtually invented English poetry, or one might almost say, the English language; since an editor of his poems (1690) could write that his was 'a name that carries everything in it that is either great or graceful in poetry. He was indeed the parent of English verse, and the first that showed us our tongue had beauty and numbers in it. The tongue came into his hands like a rough diamond; he polished it first, and to that degree that all artists since him have admired the workmanship without pretending to mend it.' Compare the twenty-two lines devoted to him in Addison's *Account of the greatest English Poets*, which includes Congreve, but not Shakespeare! For myself, I confess that I did not find it very easy to select from the whole range of his poems one which I much cared to quote. He appears in this to have had in his eye the graceful epigram of Rufinus beginning,

Πέμπω σοι, Ρυδόκλεια, τόδε στέφος,

and ending with these lines,

ταῦτα στεψαμένη, λῆξον μεγάλαυχος ἐοῦσα,
ἀνθεῖς καὶ λήγεις καὶ σὺ καὶ ὁ στέφανος.

P. 63, No. lxx.—Castara, to whom these beautiful lines are addressed, was a daughter of William Herbert, first Lord Percy, and either was already, or afterwards became, the wife of the poet. There are no purer and few more graceful records of a noble attachment than that which is contained in the poems to which Habington has given the name of the lady of his happy love. Phillips, writing in 1675, says, 'His poems are now almost forgotten.' How little they deserved this, how finished at times his versification was, lines such as the following—they are the first stanza of a poem for which I could not find room—will abundantly prove. It is headed, *Against them who lay Unchastity to the sex of Women.*

'They meet with but unwholesome springs,
And summers which infectious are,
They hear but when the mermaid sings,
And only see the falling star,
Who ever dare
Affirm no woman chaste and fair.'

P. 76, No. lxxviii.—Milton's English Sonnets are only seventeen in all:

'Soul-animating strains, alas! too few.'

They are so far beyond all doubt the greatest in the language that it is a matter of curious interest to note the utter incapacity of Johnson to recognize any greatness in them at all. The utmost which he will allow is that 'three of them are not bad;' and he and Hannah More once set themselves to investigate the causes of their badness, the badness itself being taken for granted. Johnson's explanation of this contains an illustration lively enough to be worth quoting: 'Why, Madam,' he said, 'Milton's was a genius that could hew a Colossus out of a rock, but could not carve heads on cherry-stones.'

P. 76, No. lxxix.—I have obtained room for these lines by excluding another very beautiful poem by the same author, his *Song of the Emigrants in Bermuda.* To this I was moved in part by the fact that the *Song* has found its way into many modern collections; these lines, so far as I know, into none; in part by my conviction that we have here a poem which, though less popular than the *Song*, is of a still higher mood. If after this praise, these lines should, at the first perusal, disappoint a thoughtful reader, I would ask him to read them a second time, and, if needful, a third. Sooner or later they will reveal the depth and riches of meaning which under their unpretending forms lie concealed.

P. 78, No. lxxx.—This poem will acquire a profound interest, for those at least who count there is something better in the world than Art, when we read it in the light of the fact mentioned by Lord Clarendon in his *History of the Rebellion* about its author,

namely, that 'after fifty years spent with less severity and exactness than it ought to have been, he died with the greatest remorse for that license, and the greatest manifestations of Christianity that his best friends could desire;' so that in the end the hope which he ventures here timidly to utter was fulfilled, and one thorn 'from the dry leafless trunk on Golgotha' did prove to him more precious 'than all the flourishing wreaths by laureates worn.'

P. 82, No. lxxxiv., l. 8: Campbell has transferred 'the world's gray fathers' into his poem on the Rainbow; but has no more to say for the author of these exquisite lines and of three other poems as perfect in form as in spirit which enrich this volume than this, 'He is one of the harshest even of the inferior order of the school of conceit, but he has some few scattered thoughts that meet our eye amid his harsh pages, like wild flowers on a barren heath.'

P. 83, No. lxxxv. l. 133, 134: These lines are very perplexing. Milton's lines on Shakespeare abundantly attest that the true character of the greatness of England's greatest poet rose distinct and clear before the mind of him who in greatness approached him the nearest. But in this couplet can we trace any sense of the same discernment? 'Fancy's child' may pass, seeing that 'fancy' and 'imagination' were not effectually desynonymized when Milton wrote; nay, 'fancy' was for him the greater name (see *Paradise Lost*, v. 100–113). 'Sweetest' Shakespeare undoubtedly was, but then the sweetness is so drawn up into the power, that this is about the last epithet one would be disposed to use about him. And then what could Milton possibly have intended by 'his native woodnotes wild'—the sort of praise which might be bestowed, though with no eminent fulness, upon Clare, or a poet of his rank. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *As You Like It* are perhaps the most idyllic of his plays; but the perfect art controlling at every step the prodigality of nature, in these as in all his works, takes away all fitness from language such as this, and I can only wonder that of all the commentators on Milton not one has cared to explain to us what the poet here meant.

P. 87, No. lxxxvi. l. 18: Memnon, king of Ethiopia (nigri Memnonis arma, Virgil), who according to the cyclic poets was slain before the walls of Troy by Achilles, is described in the *Odyssey*, xi. 522, as the most beautiful of the warriors there. A sister of his might therefore be presumed to be beautiful no less. Milton did not, as some say, invent the sister. Mention is made of her, her name is Hemera (Ἡμέρα), in Dictys Cretensis. It is she who pays the last honours to the ashes of her brother.—l. 19: Cassiopeia, 'starred' as having been translated into the heavens and become a constellation there. She offended the Nereids by contesting the prize of beauty with them. Milton concludes that as an Ethiopian she was

black, but this is nowhere said.—l. 108–115: Milton does not introduce Chaucer in his *Allegro*, but in his *Penseroso*; seeing in him something beside 'the merry bard,' which is all that Addison can see in the most pathetic poet in the English language.—l. 116–120: Spenser is here alluded to, of course—'our sage and serious poet, Spenser,' as Milton loved to call him. Contrast his judgment of Spenser's allegory, as being something

'Where more is meant than meets the ear;'

with Addison's,

'The long-spun allegories fulsome grow,
While the dull moral lies too plain below.'

P. 92, No. lxxvii.—Wordsworth in the Preface to an early edition of his works calls attention to Cotton's well-nigh forgotten poetry, some of it abundantly deserving the oblivion into which it has fallen, but some of a very rare excellence in its kind. This he does, quoting largely from his *Ode to Winter*, mainly with the purpose of illustrating the distinction between fancy, of which these poems, in his judgment, have much, and imagination, of which they have little or none. They have a merit which certainly strikes me more than any singular wealth of fancy which I can find in them; and which to Wordsworth also must have constituted their chief attraction, namely, the admirable English in which they are written. They are sometimes prosaic, sometimes blemished by more serious faults; but for homely vigour and purity of language, for the total absence of any attempt to conceal the deficiency of strong and high imagination by a false poetic diction—purple rags torn from other men's garments, and sewn upon his own—he may take his place among the foremost masters of the tongue. Coleridge has said as much (*Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii. p. 96): 'There are not a few poems in that volume [the works of Cotton] replete with every excellence of thought, image, and passion which we expect or desire in the poetry of the milder Muse, and yet so worded that the reader sees no reason either in the selection or the order of the words why he may not have said the very same in an appropriate conversation, and cannot conceive how indeed he could have expressed such thoughts otherwise, without loss or injury to his meaning.' I will add that this poem is drawn out to too great a length for its own interests, or for my limited space; and several stanzas toward the close have been omitted.

P. 95, No. lxxxviii.—Johnson has justly praised the 'unequalled fertility of invention' displayed in this poem, and in its pendant, *Against Hope*. To estimate *all* the wonder of them, they should be read each in the light of the other. In some lines of wretched criticism, which Addison has called *An Account of the greatest English Poets*, there is one exception to the shallowness or falseness

of most of his judgments about them, namelyin his estimate of Cowley, which is much higher than that of the present day, though not too high; wherein too he has well seized his merits and defects, both of which this poem exemplifies. These are the first six lines:

> 'Great Cowley then (a mighty genius) wrote,
> O'errun with wit, and lavish of his thought;
> His turns too closely on the reader press,
> He more had pleased us, had he pleased us less;
> One glittering thought no sooner strikes our eyes
> With silent wonder but new wonders rise.'

P. 96, No. lxxxix.—It is evident that in this Prologue and in that which follows Dryden is on his good behaviour; he has indeed so much respect for his audience that in all the eighty-five lines which compose them he has not one profane, and, still more remarkable, not one indecent allusion. Neither are the compliments which he pays his hearers, as is too often the case, fulsome and from their exaggeration offensive, but such as became him to pay and them to receive, and there is an eminent appropriateness to the time and place in them all. Though no very accurate scholar, he is yet quite scholar enough to talk with scholars on no very unequal footing; while the most eminent of those who heard him must have felt that in strength and opulence of thought, and in power of clothing this thought in appropriate forms, he immeasurably surpassed them all.

P. 99, No. xci.—Barten Holyday, Archdeacon of Oxford, and translator of Juvenal, published in 1661 his *Survey of the World*, which contains a thousand independent distiches, of which these are a favourable sample. Nearly all which I have quoted have more or less point—to my mind the distinction between the two chief historians of Greece has never been more happily drawn—and some of them have poetry as well. Yet for all this the devout prayer of the author in his concluding distich,

> 'Father of gifts, who to the dust didst give
> Life, say to these my meditations, Live,'

has not been, and will scarcely now, be fulfilled.

P. 103, No. xcv.—This is nothing more than a broad-sheet ballad published in 1641, the year of Strafford's execution, with the title *Verses lately written by Thomas Earl of Strafford.* Two copies, of different issues, but of the same date, and identical in text, exist in the British Museum, while in *The Topographer*, vol. ii. p. 234, there is printed another, and in some respects an improved text. The fall of the great statesman from his pride of place has here kindled one with perhaps but ordinary gifts for ordinary occasions to a truly poetical treatment of his theme; as to a certain extent it has roused another,

whose less original ballad in the same year and on the same theme, bearing the title, *The Ultimum Vale or Last Farewell of Thomas Earl of Strafford*, yields as its second stanza these nervous lines:

> 'Farewell, you fading honours which do blind
> By your false mists the sharpest-sighted mind;
> And having raised him to his height of cares,
> Tumble him headlong down the slippery stairs;
> How shall I praise or prize your glorious ills,
> Which are but poison hid in golden pills?'

P. 108, No. xcix.—These spirited lines were found written in an old hand in a copy of Lovelace's *Lucasta*, 1679. We have in them no doubt a Cavalier Song of our Civil Wars.

P. 108, No. c.—Davenant is scarcely known except by his strong-thoughted but heavy poem of *Gondibert*; and very little known, I should suppose, by this. But three of his poems, this and Nos. cvii. and cliii., show that in another vein, that of graceful half play, half earnest, few have surpassed him. I know nothing in its kind happier than cliii., which by an oversight has been placed somewhat too late in this volume.

P. 111, No. ci. l. 43–48: Cicero (*De Nat. Deor.* 3, 28, and elsewhere) refers to the remarkable story of Jason, tyrant of Pheræ, whom one would have stabbed, but did in fact only open a dangerous ulcer in his body.—l. 59: 'Adamant' is here used in the sense of loadstone; as in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2, i.

> 'You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant,
> And yet you draw not iron.'

P. 112, No. cii.—I have dealt somewhat boldly with this poem, of its twenty-four triplets omitting all but ten, these ten seeming to me to constitute a fine poem, which the entire twenty-four altogether fail to do. Few, I think, will agree with Horace Walpole that 'the poetry is most uncouth and inharmonious;' so far from this, it has a very solemn and majestic flow. Nor do I doubt that these lines are what they profess to be, the composition of King Charles; their authenticity is stamped on every line. We are indebted to Burnet for their preservation. He gives them in his *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton*, saying, 'A very worthy gentleman who had the honour of waiting on him then [at Carisbrook Castle], and was much trusted by him, copied them out from the original, who avoucheth them to be a true copy.'—l. 2: A word has evidently dropped out here, which is manifestly wanted by the metre, and, as it seems to me, also by the sense. I have enclosed within brackets the 'earthly' with which I have ventured to supply the want.

P. 113, No. cili.—Marvell showed how well he understood what he

was giving to the world in this ode, one of the least known but among the grandest which the English language possesses, when he called it 'Horatian.' In its whole treatment it reminds us of the highest to which the greatest Latin Artist in lyrical poetry did, when at his best, attain. To one unacquainted with Horace, this ode, not perhaps so perfect as his are in form, and with occasional obscurities of expression which Horace would not have left, will give a truer notion of the kind of greatness which he achieved than, so far as I know, could from any other poem in the language be obtained.

P. 117, No. cvi—I have taken the liberty of omitting nine out of the twenty-six stanzas of which this fine hymn is composed; I believe that it has gained much by the omission. The sense that a poor stanza is not merely no gain, but a serious injury, to a poem, was not Cowley's; still less that willingness to sacrifice parts to the effect of the whole, which induced Gray to leave out a stanza, in itself as exquisite as any which remain, from his *Elegy*; which led Milton to omit from the Spirit's *Prologue* in *Comus* sixteen glorious lines which may still be seen in his original MSS. at Cambridge, and have been often reprinted in the notes to later editions of his Poems.—l. 45–56: Johnson has said, urging the immense improvement in the mechanism of English verse which we owe to Dryden and the little which had been done before him, 'if Cowley had sometimes a finished line, he had it by chance.' Let Dryden have all the honour which is justly his due, but not at the expense of others. There are doubtless a few weak and poor lines in this poem even as now presented, but what a multitude of others, these twelve for example, without a single exception, of perfect grace and beauty, and as satisfying to the ear as to the mind.—l. 68: This line is certainly perplexing. In all the earlier editions of Cowley which I have examined it runs thus,

'Of colours mingled, Light, a thick and standing lake.'

In the modern, so far as they have come under my eye, it is printed,

'Of colours mingled light a thick and standing lake.

The line seems in neither shape to yield any tolerable sense—not in the first, with 'Light' regarded as a vocative, which, for the line so pointed, seems the only possible construction; nor yet in the second, which only acquires some sort of meaning when 'colours' is treated as a genitive plural. I have marked it as such, but am so little satisfied with the result, that, were this book to print again, I should recur to the earlier reading, which, however unsatisfactory, should not be disturbed, unless for such an emendation as carries conviction with it.

P. 120, No. cvi.—Hallam has said that 'Cowley upon the whole has had a reputation more above his deserts than any English poet,' adding, however, that 'some who wrote better had not so fine a genius.' This may have been so, but a man's contemporaries have some opportunities of judging which subsequent generations are without. They judge him not only by what he *does*, but by what he *is*; and oftentimes a man *is* more than he *does*; leaves an impression of greatness on those who come in actual contact with him which is only inadequately justified by aught which he leaves behind him, while yet in one sense it is most true. Many a man's embodimen of himself in his writings is below himself; some men's, strange to say, is above them, or at all events represents most transient moments of their lives. But I should be disposed to question Mr. Hallam's assertion, judging Cowley merely by what he has left behind him. With a poem like this before us, so full of thought, so full of imagination, containing so accurate and so masterly a sketch of the past history of natural philosophy, we may well hesitate about jumping to the conclusion that his contemporaries were altogether wrong, rating him so highly as they did. How they did esteem him lines like these of Denham, the fragment of a larger poem, not without a worth of their own, will show:

'Old mother Wit and Nature gave
Shakespeare and Fletcher all they have;
In Spenser and in Jonson Art
Of slower Nature got the start;
But both in him so equal are,
None knows which bears the happiest share.
To him no author was unknown,
Yet what he wrote was all his own,
He melted not the ancient gold,
Nor with Ben Jonson did make bold
To plunder all the Roman stores
Of poets and of orators.
Horace's wit and Virgil's state
He did not steal but emulate!
And when he would like them appear,
Their garb, but not their clothes did wear.'

l. 19–40: Compare with these the lines, inferior indeed, but themselves remarkable, and showing how strongly Cowley felt on this matter, which occur in his *Ode to Dr. Harvey*, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood:

'Thus Harvey sought for truth in Truth's own book,
The creatures; which by God Himself was writ,
And wisely thought 'twas fit
Not to read comments only upon it,
But on the original itself to look.
Methinks in art's great circle others stand,
Locked up together, hand in hand,
Every one leads as he is led,
The same bare path they tread,
And dance like fairies a fantastic round,
But neither change their motion nor their ground.'

The same thought reappears, and again remarkably expressed, although under quite different images, in his *Ode to Mr. Hobbs*. These are a few lines :

> 'We break up tombs with sacrilegious hands,
> Old rubbish we remove.
> To walk in ruins like vain ghosts we love,
> And with fond divining wands
> We search among the dead
> For treasure buriéd,
> Whilst still the liberal earth does hold
> So many virgin mines of undiscovered gold.'

Dryden in some remarkable lines addressed to Dr. Charleton expresses the same sense of the freedom with which Bacon had set free the study of nature, and the bondage from which he had delivered it :

> 'The longest tyranny that ever swayed,
> Was that wherein our ancestors betrayed
> Their freeborn reason to the Stagirite,
> And made his torch their universal light.
> So truth, while only one supplied the State,
> Grew scarce and dear, and yet sophisticate ;
> Still it was bought, like emp'ric wares or charms,
> Hard words, sealed up with Aristotle's arms.'

l. 164–182 : It ought not to be forgotten that this poem appeared first prefixed to Sprat's *History of the Royal Society of London*, London, 1667. Though not published till the year 1667, the year of Cowley's death, the book had in great part been printed, as Sprat informs us, two years before, which exactly agrees with Cowley's statement here. The position which the poem thus occupied should be kept in mind, otherwise the encomium on Sprat's *History* might seem dragged in with no sufficient motive, and merely out of motives of private friendship. It may be added that the praise is not at all so exaggerated as those who know Addison's 'tuneful prelate' only by his verse might suppose. The book has considerable merits, and Johnson speaks of it as in his day still keeping its place, and being read with pleasure. I only observed when it was too late to profit by the observation, that after l. 143, three lines occur, on this the first publication of the poem, which, by a strange heedlessness, have dropt out of all subsequent editions. They are as follows :

> 'She with much stranger art than his that put
> All the Iliads in a nut,
> The numerous work of life does into atoms shut.'

P. 129, No. cix.—This chorus, or fragment of a chorus, from the *Thyestes* of Seneca, beginning

> Me dulcis saturet quies,

and ending with these remarkable lines,

> Illi mors gravis incubat,
> Qui notus nimis omnibus
> Ignotus moritur sibi,

seems to have had much attraction for moralists and poets in the seventeenth century. Beside this paraphrase of it by Sir Matthew Hale, prefixed to one of his *Contemplations*, there is a translation by Cowley, and a third, the best of all, by Marvell, of which these are the concluding lines :

> 'Who exposed to others' eyes,
> Into his own heart never pries,
> Death's to him a strange surprise.'

P. 130, No. cx.—I have detached these two stanzas from a longer poem of which they constitute the only valuable portion. George Wither ('a most profuse pourer forth of English rhyme' Phillips calls him) was indeed so intolerable a proser in verse, so overlaid his good with indifferent or bad, that one may easily forget how real a gift he possessed, and sometimes showed that he possessed.

P. 131, No. cxii.—When Phillips, writing in 1675, styles Quarles 'the darling of our plebeian judgments,' he intimates the circle in which his popularity was highest, and helps us to understand the extreme contempt into which he afterwards fell, so that he who had a little earlier been hailed as

> 'that sweet seraph of our nation, Quarles,'

became a byeword for all that was absurdest and worst in poetry. The reacquaintance which I have made with him, while looking for some specimen of his verse worthy to be cited here, has shown me that his admirers, though they may have admired a good deal too much, had far better right than his despisers.—l. 25 : 'To vie' is to put down a certain sum upon a card ; 'to revie' is to cover this with a larger, by which the challenger becomes in turn the challenged.

P. 132, No. cxiii.—Milton's lines on Shakespeare cannot properly be counted an epitaph. But setting those aside, as not fairly coming into competition, this is, in my judgment, the finest and most affecting epitaph in the English language. Of Pope's there is not one which deserves to be compared with it. His are of art, artful, which this is no less, but this also of nature and natural. With all this it has grievous shortcomings. Death and eternity raise other issues concerning the departed besides those which are dealt with here.—This epitaph contains two fine allusions to Virgil's *Æneid*, with which Dryden was of necessity so familiar. The first, that of l. 7–10 to book v. l. 327–338. At the games with which

Æneas celebrates his father's funeral, Nisus and his younger friend Euryalus are among the competitors in the foot-race; Nisus, who is winning, slips, and Euryalus arrives the first at the goal, and carries off the prize. In the four concluding lines there is a beautiful allusion to the well-known passage, book vi. l. 860–886, in which the poet deplores the early death of that young Marcellus, with which so many fair expectations of the imperial family and of the Roman people perished.

P. 133, No. cxiv.—Elizabeth, wife of Henry Hastings, fifth Earl of Huntingdon, is the lady commemorated in this fine epitaph, 'by him who says what he saw'—for this is the attestation to the truth of all that it asserts, which Lord Falkland, mindful of the ordinary untruthfulness of epitaphs, thinks it good to subscribe.

P. 136, No. cxix.—The writer of these lines commanded a vessel sent out in 1631 by some Bristol merchants for the discovery of the North-West passage. Frozen up in the ice, he passed a winter of frightful suffering on those inhospitable shores; many of his company sinking beneath the hardships of the time. The simple and noble manner in which these sufferings were borne he has himself left on record (Harris's *Voyages*, vol. i. pp. 600-606); how too, when at length the day of deliverance dawned, and the last evening which they should spend on that cruel coast had arrived—but he shall speak his own words:—'and now the sun was set, and the boat came ashore for us, whereupon after evening prayer we assembled and went up to take a last view of our dead; where leaning upon my arm on one of their tombs I uttered these lines; which, though perhaps they may procure laughter in the wiser sort, they yet moved my young and tender-hearted companions at that time to some compassion.' To me they seem to have the pathos, better than any other, of truth.

P. 137, No. cxxi.—A few lines from this exquisite monody have found their way, but even these rarely, into some modern selections. The whole poem, inexpressibly tender and beautiful as it is, is included in Headley's *Select Beauties*, 1810, but in no other that I know. Henry King, afterwards Bishop of Chichester, married Anne, the eldest daughter of Robert Berkeley; she probably died in 1624, and, as we learn from the poem itself (see vv. 28, 29), in or about her twenty-fourth year. It would be interesting to know whether this was the lady, all hope to whose hand he at one time supposed he must for ever renounce, and did renounce in those other lines, hardly less beautiful, which he has called *The Surrender*, and which will be found at p. 65 of this volume. Henry King's *Poems* have been carefully edited by the Rev. T. Hannah, London, 1843.

P. 141, No. cxxiii.—A rough rugged piece of verse, as indeed

almost all Donne's poetry is imperfect in form and workmanship; but it is the genuine cry of one engaged in that most terrible of all struggles, wherein, as we are winners or losers, we have won all or lost all. There is indeed much in Donne, in the unfolding of his moral and spiritual life, which often reminds us of St. Augustine. I do not mean that, noteworthy as on many accounts he was, and in the language of Carew, one of his contemporaries,

> 'A king who ruled as he thought fit
> The universal monarchy of wit,'

he at all approached in intellectual or spiritual stature to the great Doctor of the Western Church. But still there was in Donne the same tumultuous youth, the same entanglement in youthful lusts, the same conflict with these, and the same final deliverance from them; and then the same passionate and personal grasp of the central truths of Christianity, linking itself as this did with all that he had suffered, and all that he had sinned, and all through which by God's grace he had victoriously struggled.

P. 142, No. cxxv.—There is a certain residue of truth in Johnson's complaint of the blending of incongruous theologies, or rather of a mythology and a theology, in this poem—Neptune and Phœbus and Panope and the Fury mixed up with St. Peter and a greater than St. Peter, and a fierce assault on the Clergy of the Church. At the same time there is a fusing power in the imagination, when it is in its highest exercise, which can bring together and chemically unite materials the most heterogeneous; and the fault of Johnson's criticism is that he has no eye for the mighty force of this which in *Lycidas* is displayed, and which has brought all or nearly all of its strange assemblage of materials into harmonious unity—and even where this is not so, hardly allows us to remember the fact, so wondrous is the beauty and splendour of the whole. But in weaker hands the bringing together of all which is here brought together, and the attempt to combine it all in one poem, would have inevitably issued in failure the most ridiculous.—l. 32–49: This and more than one other allusion in this poem implies that King wrote verses, and of an idyllic character, as would seem. In his brother's Elegy, contained in the same volume in which *Lycidas* first appeared, as much, and indeed a good deal more is said:

> 'He dressed the Muses in the brav'st attire
> That e'er they wore.'

If he wrote English verse, and it is difficult to give any other meaning to these lines, none of it has reached us. A few pieces of Latin poetry bearing his name are scattered through the volumes of encomiastic verse which were issued from Cambridge during the

time that he, as Fellow and Tutor of Christ's, was connected with it. They are only of average merit.—l. 50: A glorious appropriation of Virgil, *Buc.* x. 9, 10,

> 'Quæ nemora aut qui vos saltus habuere, puellæ
> Naiades, indigno cum Gallus amore peribat?'

l. 132: Observe the exquisite art with which Milton manages the transition from the Christian to the heathen. He assumes that Alpheus and the Sicilian Muse had shrunk away ashamed while St. Peter was speaking. In bidding them now to return, he implies that he is coming down from the spiritual heights to which for a while he had been lifted up, and entering the region of pastoral poetry once more.—l. 159–164: These lines were for a long time very obscure. Dr. Todd in his learned notes, to which I must refer, has done much to dissipate the obscurity, though I cannot think all is clear even now.

P. 148, No. cxxvi.—These lines are the short answer to a very long question, or series of questions, which Davenant has called *The Philosopher's Disquisition directed to the dying Christian.* This poem, than which I know few weightier with thought, unfortunately extends to nearly four hundred lines—its length, and the fact that it appeals but to a limited circle of readers, precluding me from finding room for more than a brief extract from it, and that in this note; but it literally abounds with lines notable as the following:

> 'Tradition, Time's suspected register,
> That wears out Truth's best stories into tales.'

I am well aware of the evil report under which Davenant labours, and there are passages in his poems which seem to bear it out, as for example this, which appears to call into question the resurrection:

> 'But ask not bodies doomed to die,
> To what abode they go:
> Since knowledge is but sorrow's spy,
> It is not safe to know.'

At the same time 'the Philosopher' here does not so much deny that there is any truth for man as that he has any organ whereby, of himself, he may attain this truth. The poem—it is the dying Christian who is addressed—opens thus:

> 'Before by death you nearer knowledge gain,
> (For to increase your knowledge you must die)
> Tell me if all that learning be not vain,
> On which we proudly in this life rely.
>
> Is not the learning which we knowledge call,
> Our own but by opinion and in part?
> Not made entirely certain, nor to all,
> And is not knowledge but disputed art?

And though a bad, yet 'tis a froward guide,
Who, vexing at the shortness of the day,
Doth, to o'ertake swift time, still onward ride,
While we still follow, and still doubt our way;

A guide, who every step proceeds with doubt,
Who guessingly her progress doth begin;
And brings us back where first she led us out,
To meet dark midnight at our restless inn.

It is a plummet to so short a line,
As sounds no deeper than the sounder's eyes:
The people's meteor, which not long can shine,
Nor far above the middle region rise.

This spy from Schools gets ill intelligence,
Where art, imposing rules, oft gravely errs;
She steals to nature's closet, and from thence
Brings nought but undecyphered characters.

She doth, like India's last discoverers, boast
Of adding to old maps; though she has bin
But sailing by some clear and open coast,
Where all is woody, wild, and dark within.

Of this forbidden fruit since we but gain
A taste, by which we only hungry grow,
We merely toil to find our studies vain,
And trust to Schools for what they cannot know.'

P. 150, No. cxxviii.—This poem, apart from its proper beauty, which is very considerable, has a deeper interest, as containing in the germ Wordsworth's still higher strain, namely his *Ode on Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.* I do not mean that Wordsworth had ever seen this poem when he wrote his. The coincidences are so remarkable that it is certainly difficult to esteem them accidental; but Wordsworth was so little a reader of anything out of the way, and at the time when his Ode was composed, the *Silex Scintillans* was altogether out of the way, a book of such excessive rarity, that an explanation of the points of contact between the poems must be sought for elsewhere. The complete forgetfulness into which poetry, which, though not of the very highest order of all, is yet of a very high one, may fall, is strikingly exemplified in the fact that as nearly as possible two centuries intervened between the first and second editions of Vaughan's poems. The first edition of the first part of the *Silex Scintillans* appeared in 1650, the second edition of the book in 1847. Oblivion overtook him from the first. Phillips in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, 1675, just mentions him and no more; and knows him only by his *Olor Iscanus*, a juvenile production, of comparatively little worth; yet seeing that it yields such lines as the following—they form part of a poem addressed to the unfortunate Elizabeth of Bohemia, our first James' daughter—it cannot be affirmed to be of none:

Thou seem'st a rosebud born in snow;
A flower of purpose sprung to bow
To heedless tempests and the rage
Of an incensèd stormy age:

And yet as balm-trees gently spend
Their tears for those that do them rend,
Thou didst nor murmur nor revile,
But drank'st thy wormwood with a smile.'

As a divine Vaughan may be inferior, but as a poet he is certainly syperior, to Herbert, who never wrote anything so purely poetical as *The Retreat*. Still Vaughan would probably never have written as he has, if Herbert, whom he gratefully owns as his master, had not shown him the way.

P. 154, No. cxxxii.—This poem, so little known, though the work of one so well known, opens very solemnly and grandly, but does not maintain itself altogether at the same height to the end. Even as I have given it, the two concluding strophes are inferior to the others; and this declension would be felt by the reader still more strongly, if I had not at once lightened the poem, and brought it within reasonable compass, by the omission of no less than six strophes which immediately precede these. It bears date January 14, 168⅔; and was written at a season of great weakness and intense bodily suffering (see his *Life* edited by Sylvester, Part III. p. 192); but the actual life of the great non-conformist divine was prolonged for some eight or nine years more.

P. 163, No. cxxxviii.—I have gladly found room in this volume, as often as I fairly could, for poems written by those who, strictly speaking, were not poets; or who, if poets, have only rarely penned their inspiration, and, either wanting the accomplishment of verse, or not caring to use it, have preferred to embody thoughts which might have claimed a metrical garb in other than metrical forms. Poems from such authors must always have a special interest for us. To the former of these classes the author of these manly and high-hearted lines belongs, and another whose epitaph on his companions left behind in the Arctic regions is earlier given (see No. cxix.). Bacon (for who can deny to him a poet's gifts?) and, before all others as a poet in prose, Jeremy Taylor, belong to the second. It would be more difficult to affirm of Bishop Berkeley (see No. cxxxvii.), and of Sir Thomas Browne (see No. cxxxi.), to which of these classes they ought to be assigned.

P. 166, No. cxxxix.—These lines, in their wit worthy of Lucian, and with a moral purpose which oftentimes Lucian is wholly without, are called A Fable, but manifestly have no right to the name. I have omitted six lines, but with reluctance, being as in fact they are among the most moral lines in the whole poem.

P. 169, No. cxli.—This is a party ballad, and, rightly to understand it, we must understand the circumstances of which it assumes on our part a knowledge. In 1727 Admiral Hosier blockaded Porto-Bello with twenty ships; but was not allowed to attack it, war not having actually broken out with Spain, and, a peace being patched up, his squadron was withdrawn. In 1740 Admiral Vernon took Porto-Bello with six ships. It was apparently a very creditable exploit; but Vernon being an enemy of Walpole's, and a member of the Opposition, it was glorified by them beyond its merits. When they boasted that he with six ships had effected what Hosier had not been allowed to attempt with twenty, the statement was a perfectly true one, but in nothing dishonourable to him or to his employers. Glover is here the mouthpiece of the Opposition, who, while they exalted Vernon, affected to pity Hosier, who had died, as they declared, of a broken heart; and of whose losses by disease during the blockade they did not fail to make the most. It is a fine ballad, and will do for Glover what his *Leonidas* would altogether have failed to do. This we may confidently affirm, whether we quite agree with Lord Stanhope or not, that it is 'the noblest song perhaps ever called forth by any British victory, except Mr. Campbell's *Battle of the Baltic*.'

P. 172, No. cxlii.—This poem was for a while supposed to be old, and an old line has been worked up into it. This was probably the refrain of an older as it is of the more modern poem, which has Miss Elliott, (1727–1805), an accomplished lady of the Minto family, for its author.—l. 1: 'lilting,' singing cheerfully.—l. 3: 'loaning,' broad lane.—l. 5: 'scorning,' rallying.—l. 6: 'dowie' dreary.—l. 8: 'leglin,' milkpail.—l. 9: 'shearing' reaping.—l. 10: 'bandsters,' sheaf-binders.—'lyart,' inclining to gray.—'runkled,' wrinkled.—l. 11: 'fleeching,' coaxing.—l. 14: 'bogle,' ghost.

P. 176, No. cxlvi.—One who listens very attentively may catch in these pretty lines a faint prelude of Wordsworth's immortal poem addressed to the same bird.

P. 177, No. cxlvii.—There can scarcely be a severer trial of the poet's power of musical expression, of his command of the arts by which melody is produced, than the unrhymed lyric, which very seldom perfectly satisfies the ear. That Collins has so completely succeeded here is itself a sufficient answer to Gray's assertion that he 'had a bad ear,' to Johnson's complaint, 'his lines commonly are of slow motion; clogged and impeded with a cluster of consonants.' Collins, in whom those lines of Wordsworth found only too literal a fulfilment,

> 'We poets do begin our lives in gladness,
> But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness,'

has falsified the prediction of Gray. Writing of him and of Warton, who both had lately died, Gray passes this judgment upon them, 'They both deserve to live some years, but will not.' Half of this prophecy has come true; and Warton cannot be said to have lasted to our time; but Collins has now won a position so assured that instead of the 'some years' which were all that Gray would have allotted to him, we may confidently affirm that he will live as long as any love for English poetry survives.

P. 181, No. cl.—This and the following poem are of the court, courtly. At the same time a truly poetical treatment may raise *vers de Société* such as these are, into a higher sphere than their own; and if I do not mistake, it has done so here; and may justly claim for these poems that they be drawn from the absolute oblivion into which they have fallen. Ambrose Philips, it is true, has a niche in *Johnson's Poets*; but so much which is stupid, and so much which is worse than stupid, finds its place there, that for a minor poet, for all except those mighty ones to whom admission or exclusion would be a matter of absolute indifference, who are strong enough to burst any cerements, that collection is rather a mausoleum of the dead than a temple of the living. These poems with two or three others of like kind—a singularly beautiful one is quoted in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*—earned for Philips the title of Namby Pamby, so little were his contemporaries able to appreciate even the partial return to nature which they display. For a clever travesty of his style by Isaac Hawkins Browne, beginning,

'Little tube of mighty power,
Charmer of an idle hour,'

see Campbell's *Specimens*, vol. v. p. 361.

P. 186, No. cliii.—This admirable poem has this in common with another of scarcely inferior merit,

'And ye shall walk in silk attire,'

that they both first appeared as broad-sheets sold in the streets of Edinburgh; and, justly popular as they both from the first have been, no one has ever cared to challenge either of them as his own. This, however, though not claimed by Mickle, nor included by him in an edition of his poems published by himself, was after his death claimed *for* him, and Allan Cunningham thinks the claim to be fairly made out. It mainly rests on the fact that a copy of the poem with alterations marking the text as in process of formation was found among his papers and in his handwriting. Without inspection of the document, it is impossible to say what value as evidence it possesses. Certainly everything else which we know of Mickle's is rather evidence against his authorship of this exquisite domestic

lyric than for it. Still I have not felt myself at liberty to disturb the ascription of it to him.

P. 189, No. clv.—The immense superiority of this poem over every other in the little volume of Hamilton of Bangour's poems, which was published at Edinburgh in 1760, some six years after his death, is not easy to account for. This poem has its faults; that it is a modern seeking to write in an ancient manner is sometimes too evident; but it is a tragic story tragically told, the situation boldly conceived, and the treatment marked by strength and passion throughout. Nothing else in the volume contains a trace of passion or of power, or is of the slightest value whatever. The fact that the poet has here come within the circle of the inspirations of Yarrow cannot of itself be accepted as sufficient to explain a fact which is certainly a curious one. It is plain from more than one citation or allusion that Wordsworth, in his *Yarrow Unvisited* and *Yarrow Visited*, had this poem quite as much in his eye as the earlier ballads whose scene is laid on the banks of the same stream.

P. 199, No. clx.—I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of quoting Mr. Palgrave's beautiful criticism of this sonnet, in its own kind of a beauty so peerless:—'The Editor knows no sonnet more remarkable than this which records Cowper's gratitude to the Lady whose affectionate care for many years gave what sweetness he could enjoy to a life radically wretched. Petrarch's sonnets have a more ethereal grace and a more perfect finish, Shakespeare's more passion, Milton's stand supreme in stateliness, Wordsworth's in depth and delicacy. But Cowper's unites with an exquisiteness in the turn of thought which the ancients would have called irony, an intensity of pathetic tenderness peculiar to his loving and ingenuous nature.'

P. 201, No. clxii.—Gray, who esteemed Tickell 'a poor short-winded imitator of Addison,' qualifies his contempt so far that he adds, 'His ballad, however, of Colin and Lucy I always thought the prettiest in the world.' After some hesitation I have not thought it pretty enough for a place in this volume. It is otherwise with the poem for which I have found room. Johnson's censure of poems, whether praise or blame, carries no great weight with it; and when he says of this one, 'nor is a more sublime or more elegant funeral poem to be found in the whole compass of English literature,' the praise is extravagant. Still it has real merits, and sounds like the genuine utterance of a true regret for one who had been the poet's effectual patron and friend.

P. 204, No. clxiii.—There have been many guesses who the 'Unfortunate Lady' commemorated in these pathetic, but thoroughly pagan, lines may have been; but the mystery which wraps her story has never been dispersed. With the ten first lines before us nothing

can be idler than to deny that she was one who had laid violent hands on her own life.

P. 207, No. clxiv.—Robert Levet lived above twenty years under Johnson's roof, a dependant and humble friend, and when under it he died in 1782, Johnson commemorated his genuine worth in these admirable lines. He is mentioned several times in Boswell's *Life*.

P. 209, No. clxvi.—This is the last original piece which Cowper wrote; and, as Southey has truly observed, 'all circumstances considered, one of the most affecting that ever was composed.' The incident on which it rests is related in Anson's *Voyage round the World*, fifth edition, p. 79.

P. 212, No. clxviii.—This noblest elegy has a point of contact with an illustrious event in English history. As the boats were advancing in silence to that night-assault upon the lines of Quebec which should give Canada to the English crown, Wolfe repeated these lines in a low voice to the other officers in his boat, adding at the close of the recitation, 'Now, gentlemen, I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec.' For himself within a few hours that line was to find its fulfilment,

'The paths of glory lead but to the grave.'

We owe to Lord Stanhope (*History of England from the Peace of Utrecht*, c. 35) this interesting anecdote.—l. 45–72: Gray, who had read almost everything, may have here had in his eye a remarkable passage in Philo, *De Sobriet.* § 9. Having spoken of the many who were inwardly equipped with the highest gifts and faculties, he goes on: *τὸ δὲ κάλλος τῶν ἐν ταῖς διανοίαις ἀγαλμάτων οὐκ ἰσχυσαν ἐπιδείξασθαι διὰ πενίαν ἢ ἀδοξίαν, ἢ νόσον σώματος, ἢ τὰς ἄλλας κῆρας, ὅσαι τὸν ἀνθρώπινον περιπολοῦσι βίον.* And then he goes on, exactly as Gray does, to point out how these outward hindrances have circumscribed not merely the virtues of some but the crimes of others: *πάλιν τοίνυν κατὰ τὰ ἐναντία μυρίους ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν ἀνάνδρους, ἀκολάστους, ἄφρονας, ἀδίκους, ἀσεβεῖς ἐν ταῖς διανοίαις ὑπάρχοντας, τὸ δὲ κακίας ἑκάστης αἶσχος ἀϋνατοῦντας ἐπιδεικνυσθαι δι' ἀκαιρίαν τῶν εἰς τὸ ἁμαρτάνειν καιρῶν.*

P. 216, No. clxix.—I have not included hymns in this collection, save only in rare instances when a high poetical treatment of their theme has given them a value quite independent of that which they derive from adequately fulfilling the special objects for which they were composed. It is thus with this noble poem, which, though not eminently adapted for liturgic use, is yet to my mind quite the noblest among Charles Wesley's hymns. It need hardly be said that the key to it, so far as a key can be found from without and not from within, lies in the study of Gen. xxxii. 24–32.—l. 59: The

attempt to break down in English the distinction between the perfect and the past participle, and because they are identical in some instances to regard them as identical in all, has happily been defeated, at least for the present; but it has left its mark on much of the poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, and Wesley, who here writes 'strove' for 'striven,' and l. 68, 'rose' for 'risen,' only does what Shakespeare and Milton have done before him.

P. 241, No. cxci.—Campbell's *Lord Ullin's Daughter* is a poem of considerable merit, but a comparison of it with this of Shelley (the motive of the two compositions is identical) at once reveals the distinction between a poet of first-rate eminence, of 'imagination all compact,' and one of the second order. Both poems are narrative; but the imagination in one has fused and absorbed the whole action of the story into itself in a way which is not so much as attempted in the other.

P. 256, No. ccviii.—In Beattie's *Life and Letters of Campbell*, vol. ii. p. 42, we have the original sketch of this poem. It is very instructive, revealing as it does how one chief secret of success in poetry may be the daring to omit. As it is there sketched out, extending as it does to twenty stanzas of six lines each, that is to more than twice its present length, many of these stanzas being but of secondary merit, it would have passed as a spirited ballad, and would have presently been forgotten, instead of taking as it has now done its place among the noblest lyrics, the trumpet-notes in the language. But indeed this willingness to sacrifice parts to the interests of the whole is a condition without which no great poem, least of all a great lyric poem, which is absolutely dependent for its effects on rapidity of movement, can be written; and those who would fain escape the inevitable doom of oblivion which awaits almost all verse will do well to keep ever in remembrance how immeasurably more in poetry the half will sometimes be than the whole.

P. 265, No. ccxiv.—There is a mistake here, into which it is curious that one who had watched so closely as Scott had done the struggle with Republican and Imperial France should have fallen. It was not Marengo (1800) but Austerlitz (1805) which did so much to kill Pitt, and with which is connected the anecdote of his last days here referred to, and thus related by Lord Stanhope: 'On leaving his carriage, as he passed along the passage to his bedroom [at Putney, which he never left], he observed a map of Europe which had been drawn down from the wall; upon which he turned to his niece, and mournfully said, "Roll up that map; it will not be wanted these ten years."' (*Life of Pitt*, vol. iv. p. 369.)

P. 266, No. ccxv.—After the battle of Novara, which had

virtually decided the conflict for a time, but before peace was signed between Austria and Piedmont, the inhabitants of Brescia rose against their Austrian garrison, March 21, 1849. They were crushed after a gallant struggle, but one which had been hopeless from the first.

P. 277, No. ccxix.—This poem is full of allusions to the tragical issues of Shelley's first rash and ill-considered marriage—issues which must have filled him ever after with very deep self-reproach. Far too slight as the expression of this is here—indeed it is hardly here at all—we know from other sources that the retrospect was one which went far to darken his whole after life. This serious fault has not hindered me from quoting these lines, in many respects of an exquisite tenderness and beauty, and possessing that deep interest which autobiography must always possess. One stanza has been omitted.

P. 291, No. ccxxiv.—These lines, written in Greece, and only three months before his death, are the last which Byron wrote, and, in their earlier stanzas at least, about the truest. In many of his smaller poems of passion, and in *Childe Harold* itself, there is a *falsetto* which strikes painfully on the ear of the mind. But it is quite otherwise with these deeply pathetic lines, in which the spoiled child of this world passes judgment on that whole life of self-pleasing which he had laid out for himself, and declares what had been the mournful end of it all.

P. 315, No. ccxlvii.—This, if I mistake not, is the only poem by Herbert Knowles which survives. It appeared first in *The Quarterly Review*, vol. ii. p. 396, with this account of the writer: 'His life had been eventful and unfortunate, till his extraordinary merits were discovered by persons capable of appreciating and willing and able to assist him. He was then placed under a kind and able instructor, and arrangements had been made for supporting him at the University; but he had not enjoyed that prospect many weeks before it pleased God to remove him to a better world. The reader will remember that they are the verses of a schoolboy, who had not long been taken from one of the lowest stations of life, and he will then judge what might have been expected from one who was capable of writing with such strength and originality upon the tritest of all subjects.' It was Southey, I believe, who wrote thus, in whose estimate of these verses I entirely concur; as it was he who was prepared to befriend the youthful poet, if he had not passed so soon beyond the reach and need of human help.

P. 326, No. cclvii.—It is not a little remarkable that one to whom English was an acquired language, who can have had little or no experience in the mechanism of English verse, should yet have left

us what Coleridge does not hesitate to call, 'the finest and most grandly conceived sonnet in our language'—words, it is true, which he slightly modifies by adding, 'at least it is only in Milton and in Wordsworth that I remember any rival.'

P. 352, No. cclxxii.—This poem is drawn from a small volume with the title, *David and Samuel, with other Poems*, published in the year 1859. Much in the volume has no right to claim exemption from the doom which before very long awaits all verse except the very best. Yet one or two poems have caught excellently well the tone, half serious, half ironical, of Goethe's lighter pieces; while more than one of the more uniformly serious, this above all, seem to me to have remarkable merit. It finds its motive, as I need hardly say, in the resolution of the Dutch, when their struggle with the overwhelming might of Louis XIV. and his satellite Charles II. seemed hopeless, to leave in mass their old home, and to found another Holland among their possessions in the Eastern world.

P. 354, No. cclxxiii.—During the last Chinese war the following passage occurred in a letter of the Correspondent of *The Times*: 'Some Seiks, and a private of the Buffs, having remained behind with the grog-carts, fell into the hands of the Chinese. On the next morning, they were brought before the authorities, and commanded to perform the kotou. The Seiks obeyed; but Moyse, the English soldier, declaring that he would not prostrate himself before any Chinaman alive, was immediately knocked upon the head, and his body thrown on a dunghill.'

P. 356, No. cclxxiv.—Turner's fine picture of the Téméraire, a grand old man-of-war (it had been, as its name indicates, taken from the French) towed into port by a little ugly steamer, that so, after all its noble toils, it might there be broken up, is itself a poem of a very high order, which has here been finely transferred into verse.

P. 359, No. cclxxviii.—A selection of Walt Whitman's poetry has very lately been published in England, the editor of this declaring that in him American poetry properly so-called begins. I must entirely dissent from this statement. What he has got to say is a very old story indeed, and no one would have attended to his version of it, if he had not put it more uncouthly than others before him. That there is no contradiction between higher and lower, that there is no holy and no profane, that the flesh has just as good rights as the spirit—this has never wanted prophets to preach it, nor people to act upon it; and this is the sum-total of his message to America and to the world. I was glad to find in his *Drum-taps* one little poem which I could quote with real pleasure.

P. 379, No. ccxcviii.—*Tithonus* is a noble variation on Juvenal's noble line in the 10th Satire, where, enumerating the things which a wise man may fitly pray for, he includes among these the mind and temper,

> Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
> Naturæ:

words which, grand as they are, reappear in still grander form, even as they are brought into a more intimate connection with this poem in Dryden's translation,

> 'And count it nature's privilege to die.'

P. 386, No. cccv.—Few readers of this and other choice specimens of American poetry—some of which have now for the first time found their way into any English anthology—but will share the admiration which I cannot refuse to express for many among them. It is true that they are not always racy of the soil, that sometimes they only do what has been as well done, though scarcely better, in the old land; but whether we regard the perfect mechanism of the verse, the purity and harmony of the diction, the gracious thoughts so gracefully embodied, these poems, by Whittier, by Bryant, by Holmes, by Emerson and by others, do, so far as they reach, leave nothing to be desired.

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